

COUNTRY LIFE

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Photo. CHANCELLOR

THE COUNTESS OF MINTO.

Dublin.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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PLAY!

WHEN Albert Trott delivered to Robert Abel the first ball bowled in first-class cricket for the season of 1900 everyone felt that that season was being duly inaugurated, and that it was in the eternal fitness of things that two such fine exponents of the game should be *vis-à-vis* thus early. Whether there was any eternal fitness in the weather then prevailing was quite another question. Nor was it anything but appropriate that Dr. Grace's bantling, the London County Cricket Club, should take its first airing as a first-class club on the same occasion. Indeed, if the London County Cricket Club can continue to put teams of similar strength into the field in the future, it will well have justified its existence and its promotion; but the capabilities of the club will, we expect, be sorely tried when later in the year the county matches are in full swing, and the members of those which are temporarily "resting," as the profession calls it, are glad of an off-day themselves. It is, we are well aware, a somewhat unprofitable task to forecast, even in the lightest mood, the events of a cricket year, but as the spirit of prophecy has already

indicated its presence, a glance at future possibilities, which may even penetrate dimly to probabilities, may not be out of place.

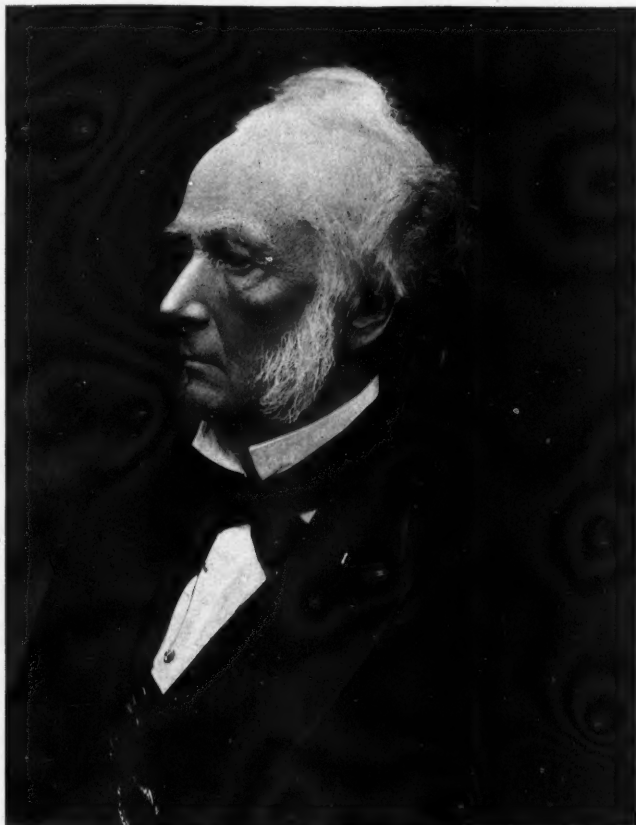
So grim a thing as war does not leave even sport alone, so that familiar faces will be temporarily—only temporarily, we hope—missed from cricket grounds, though happily at the moment of writing the casualties to cricketers have not been very numerous, considering how many good players are fighting the battles of their country.

The Surrey ranks have had no gap left in them by reason of military duties, but the retirement of K. J. Key is an event that cannot be passed over. Succeeding so famous a leader as J. Shuter, he has kept his side together in capital style, and has in an unobtrusive way made a very large number of runs for his county. We write the word "unobtrusive" advisedly, for there are many who have hardly noticed the regularity with which Key added runs, though big scores were not very frequent with him, for the simple reason that he always went in late, and huge figures were consequently rare. In D. L. A. Jephson he will have a thoroughly keen successor, whose captaincy we fully expect to be as creditable as his cricket. Middlesex can command the services of her 1899 eleven to a man, and should be a formidable candidate for the championship, even though a long spell of ill-health may interfere somewhat with F. G. J. Ford's powers of rapid scoring. The absence of F. S. Jackson with his regiment will be a great loss to Yorkshire, and may cost the side more than one match, especially as F. Mitchell is also campaigning. It is fortunate for the big county that it is as rich in good cricketers as in broad acres; but it is no excessive compliment to Jackson's abilities to declare that his absence leaves a gap that no other cricketer could adequately fill. Lancashire is lucky in recovering a great cricketer and in losing none, for all who love the game rejoice to hear that Briggs has so completely recovered from the attack which shattered his health in the third test match that he is now able to take the field again. Sussex will again be under the command of Ranjitsinhji; "again," because W. L. Murdoch, who left the side early last season, is not going to resume his place, though, as the famous Australian batsman is still a comparatively young man, we shall probably hear of him again. C. B. Fry, reported to be in various regiments and in various parts of South Africa, is very much in England, and has received a commission in the Royal Artillery; hence we may hope to see plenty of him in the cricket field, unless war exigencies demand that his battery be sent to the front. Essex will welcome C. J. Kortright back after a year's absence, but it is doubtful whether he will be able to keep up his old pace as a bowler; still he will help to compensate for A. J. Turner's enforced absence "with the colours." Neither Warwickshire nor Kent will suffer from war's "alarums and excursions," and will be represented by much the same sides as in last year, the same remark applying to Notts and Gloucestershire, though G. L. Jessop will command the latter side in the place of W. Troup, who has gone abroad. Hants, however, draws so many of its men from the Army that its powers will be much impaired; especially missed will be such fine players as Major Poore and Captain Wynyard, but there will be even more absentees than this. The Worcestershire Eleven is represented at the front by W. L. Foster, one of the famous band of brothers, who, as galloper to Lord Methuen, had, it is said, no less than nine horses shot under him in one grim day—the day of Magersfontein—but is still alive and unhurt. Somerset will miss at least three men, H. T. Stanley, F. A. Phillips, and Captain Hedley; while both Leicestershire and Derbyshire have a man at the front.

How far these losses will affect the position of counties in the championship list remains to be seen; but, while we do not underrate the powers of the absent ones, we venture to think that matters meteorological are far more likely to upset calculated results. There are those who prophesy a wet season, though we know not whether they found those prophecies on the doctrine of averages or the stated fact that years which end with a 0 are generally wet years. Much as we should regret such a spoil-sport as a rainy season, it would, however, possess an interest of its own; it would show us how far many proposed reforms are needed, and would almost certainly produce some very unexpected results in the order of counties for the championship. In any case the shrinkage of scoring would undoubtedly bring some of the weaker counties much nearer to their stronger rivals, and lead to closer and more exciting finishes than we have seen in the sunny and delightful summers that have prevailed of late. In one forecast we may safely venture, namely, that the interest shown in the county cricket of the year will be greater than ever, such interest having always been progressive. Though we do not hold that an Australian visit does much to blunt the edge of enthusiasm over county games, still it does something, and glad as we shall be to sample the prowess of the West Indies, we do not anticipate that their presence, welcome as it is, will cause any reaction that will detract from the keenness that the counties show over their own competitions. One grave omission in an early paragraph we

hasten to repair, though we do not regret it, as it is a pleasant and graceful form of epilogue to be able to congratulate L. C. H. Palaiet of Somersetshire on his recovery from the serious operation that closed the cricket ground to him in 1899, and to hope that his enforced rest will only have added fresh grace to the most graceful of executants.

The late Duke of Argyll, K.G.



THE death of the eighth Duke of Argyll has left a vacancy that will prove hard to fill. Besides being the head of the great clan Campbell, and one of the largest landed proprietors in Scotland, he was an ardent politician, an orator of no small ability, and a scientist whose range of subjects was almost unlimited. Born in 1823, he attained the age of 77, having filled many important posts during his long career of usefulness, including those of Lord Privy Seal, 1853-55, 1859-66, and 1880-81; Postmaster-General, 1855-58; and Secretary of State for India, 1868-74.

In 1844 he married Lady Elizabeth Georgiana Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, daughter of the second Duke of Sutherland and mother of the Marquess of Lorne, the husband of H.R.H. the Princess Louise, who succeeds his father. In 1881 he married Amelia Maria, eldest daughter of Bishop Claughton. The present Duchess, who survives her husband, the daughter of the late Archibald McNeil, Esq., of Colonsay, was married in 1895. Our illustration is from a photograph by Mr. J. Thomson, 70A, Grosvenor Street, W.



IT is really rather difficult to understand what is the right thing to say about the despatches which have come from the seat of war. One can say "Why?" about ten times over. Why were they sent? Why were they kept? Why were they published? If published at all, why were they not published in their entirety? Why was Lord Methuen not mentioned? And if he was mentioned, why were we not told what

was said about him? In fact, the whole series of despatches is simply horrible. And the only comfort that is left is that Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener are both certainly all right, and that at the end, in spite of our lack of intelligence, we shall certainly come out on top. And that is all that need be said about the war this week.

Meanwhile the Queen is still in Ireland; at least she will be leaving Ireland at about the moment when these words are published. And she will be leaving in great style. Never until last week was there such a sight seen as that of a royal yacht carrying a queen and two princesses crossing the Irish Channel under the escort of three cruisers and eight battleships; and never in the whole history of Ireland has there been anything approaching to the excitement and the sensation which surrounded the Royal visit. It seemed that the state entry into Dublin was great, and without a doubt it was. But Saturday's review on the Fifteen Acres, which are really thirty-seven, was greater. It was a scene of unexampled magnificence. The troops who were present were for the most part young or simply Militia, but the sailors were there, and their guns were there, and the people were there. The scene, too, was more than commonly picturesque, and when, at the end of all the proceedings, the Duke of Connaught called for cheers for the Queen, there was every circumstance of splendour, there was the clear sky, there was a torrid sun, there were the Dublin mountains in the background, and when the troops and sailors shouted, we simply did not hear them. That was because at least 150,000 persons, congregated round that vast parallelogram, were all shouting as loud as they knew. It was wonderful, unextinguishable from the memory.

And now the Queen has gone from Ireland, but it is comforting to reflect that her visit has not been entirely concerned with affairs of pomp and splendour. She has reviewed the troops, she has made a state entry, she has made a state departure. But both she and her daughters have had an eye for that which was practical and for that which was charitable. Hardly a day has passed but that Princess Christian or Princess Henry of Battenberg have visited a hospital, without respect of creed. Then, again, the Queen has shown particular interest in Irish industries. Those who know Ireland know full well that the Congested Districts Board has done a great and good work in subsidising tradesmen and manufacturers who were disposed to push Irish industries in the poorest districts, and it is stated in the papers—and oddly enough it is true in spite of them—that Her Majesty was very much pleased with the exhibits of these Irish industries which were submitted to her by the board, and that she purchased a large number of Irish products.

The products were for the most part homespun from Donegal, where the peasantry own their own sheep, dye the wool, card it, spin it, and weave it. Nay, more, they make their dyes from lichens, moss, heather, and bramble roots. Besides this, there is lace from many quarters in Donegal, and drawn thread work, carpets, and crochet work. And yet it is wrong to say Donegal only, for in the County Mayo, and in the County Galway, work has been carried on with great success, and the Letterfrack basket industry, originally started by Miss Sturge, a philanthropic lady from Birmingham, has been very successful.

A correspondent writes: "Providence sometimes blunders, but certainly Providence never did better than at Trinity College during the visit of the Queen to Dublin. There was a gas-jet which overheated and caused to burn the wainscoting in the library. There was actually a fire, and a conflagration seemed to be imminent. But as luck would have it, or as Providence would have it, the fire melted a lead pipe which contained water, and the water put out the fire, and two opposite elements combined to save the most important part of Trinity College from destruction."

Mr. W. H. Hudson is a naturalist, and, on occasion, an extremist. But we trust that on this occasion he is a pessimist also. At the end of a letter to the *Times* he writes: "It has long been a cherished hope, latterly a belief, of Londoners, that the unoccupied portion of Old Deer Park, over 300 acres in extent, would never be built upon. That hope and dream may be dismissed at once; but that the blotting-out process is about to be started precisely at that spot where building will at once and for ever destroy the charm of the cottage grounds is peculiarly discreditable in the circumstances. For out-and-out Philistinism it is on a par with the act of the Office of Works in 1880 in destroying a grove of 700 elm trees in Kensington Gardens—the tallest and healthiest trees in London. And it is an act which London—that 'desert inhabited by neglected humanity'—will not forget and will not forgive." But for our part we simply refuse to believe that the decision of the Government to make a National Physical Laboratory in the Old Deer Park at Richmond, at the side of the Queen's Cottage

grounds, will be persevered in when agitation is once begun. And for our part also we shall be prepared to help the agitation against the scheme by every means in our power.

This note is a little late, but it is worth publishing, notwithstanding. It appears that Baron de Vaux has published in Paris a book entitled "*Le Monde du Sport*." It is an excellent book, and it is full of compliments to the English. "We have to thank England," says the Baron, "for the improvement of our breeds of horses, of dogs, of animals of all kinds." That is perfectly true, but it is not true that Dr. W. G. Grace ever made more than 1,000 runs in an innings, or that a catapult is often used in cricket, or that a bowler is no-balled if he raises his arm above his shoulder. On the other hand, the best of our critics are not infallible, for the *Morning Post*, which ought to know, writes thus: "Lord de Grey's shooting feats are known to be wonderful, but we had not previously been told that in partridge driving it is his practice to kill off his birds at a distance of goyds., or that he habitually uses three guns and brings down those birds, one with each barrel out of every covey." Ninety yards is, as Huckleberry Finn would say, "a stretcher," but at a really first-class shoot men do use three guns, and Lord de Grey is perfectly capable of bringing down a bird with each barrel of each of them.

The name of Foster will assuredly be one for Malvern School to conjure with. For years there have been a succession of Fosters going up to the University and out into the wider world of athletic fame, all carrying on the great traditions of the name for proficiency in cricket, racquets, and all the games in which the harmonious working of strong hand and correct eye is essential, and now it is a Foster that has done the yeoman's service in winning the Public Schools' Racquets for the school. Rugby made a plucky fight against them, a fight worthy of the Arnold tradition that his school maintains so well, but their courage was of no avail against the greater skill of Malvern.

The beautiful weather of last week, though it arrived too late to suit the devotees of St. Lubbock, has been of immense service to the country, and for some days it has almost been possible, in the words of a countryman, to see things growing. As if by a miracle, woods that on Easter Monday wore the aspect of winter have assumed their first coat of shimmering green. Wild flowers—primroses, cowslips, anemones, and violets—have begun to bloom in immense numbers. Lately arrived migrants, particularly the cuckoo and the nightingale, have begun to call and sing. We have advanced into spring with a bound. Very opportune has it been to the farmer. April sunshine has completed what the drying winds of March began, and sowing is being completed under the most favourable circumstances. It is being freely said that a late season is not necessarily a bad one.

We are always glad to hear of measures for extending the range of that most game and interesting of all our little fishes, the brown trout, but to engage our respect such measures must show that they are undertaken with reasonable intelligence; and giving every credit for its good motive, it really cannot be said that such intelligence presided over the recent attempt to import trout ova into some of the rivers in Cashmere. The ova were sent out in a slow steamer, no special precautions were taken for keeping them cool, they hatched out in the Red Sea, with a result that, to put it kindly, was of no benefit to the sportsman in Cashmere. Cashmere is such a grand sporting country that some trout in its rivers seems the one thing lacking to complete it as a sportsman's paradise, but it is not on these lines that they will successfully introduce the trout. In the New Zealand fish culture places they make a study of packing ova with a supply of ice for travelling in hot climates. Would it be worth while trying to import them into India from that excellent nursery?

The sudden change of temperature has produced a wonderful rise of the natural fly on most of the rivers, but yet the trout have not been taking the artificial bait kindly, nor have they appeared to be feeding much on the natural fly; yet that they have glutted themselves on the spent fly under water is evident from the fact that most of those taken have disgorged quantities of fly from their gullets. It appears as if the ideal state when fly are just numerous enough to induce fish to rise, yet not sufficient to feed them into a state of satiety, would never be reached in this imperfect planet.

The last week has made a great difference in fishing conditions. Rivers which were full of water, giving good chances for the running up of spring salmon, have gone down low, and the water has become bright and clear. At the same time, the rise of the natural fly noted above has proved to the distinct advantage of the trout fisher. But, on the other hand, the water has run down so low, except in the chalk streams,

which are less dependent on the rainfall than most of them, that the chance of sport is poor. And then, again, in the chalk streams, though they may keep up their flow, the trout are not in condition so early as elsewhere. But the angler has ever been the victim of Fortune's caprices; it is no new rôle for him to fill.

We have very great sympathy with Mr. Thomas G. Read, who has been explaining "How to Revive British Agriculture," and is well entitled to a hearing. But his recommendations stand little chance of being adopted. They are three in number, viz.: (1) A bounty on home-grown and an import duty on foreign wheat; (2) The prohibition of flour as an import—the idea being that if we grind our own corn the offal will remain in this country for feeding purposes; (3) A reduction of the beer duty and the imposition of a tax on all articles going into a brewery other than barley, malt, and hops. To discuss the proposals seriously would be a waste of time, since at this moment there is not a scrap of evidence to show that any party in the state is in the slightest degree likely to adopt a protectionist cry for the next General Election. Indeed, we cannot help thinking it a pity that anyone should harp on this string, as it only encourages farmers to look to Parliament for help that can only come from themselves. What it means is virtually to ask the working classes to pay a little more for their food in order to help agriculture, a thing they will never do. Far better is it to urge the farmers to fight for their own land, and go in for cultivating produce they can sell, trying co-operation when the individual effort fails.

Side by side with Mr. Read's suggestion may be placed the following curious catechism, vouched for by a correspondent as having been taken down from the conversation of a German schoolmaster with his pupils: "Does a country's greatness depend on agriculture or industries? No country can be permanently great in which agriculture is strangled. What great power is there where agriculture dwindles away and industries increase? England. And is England decaying? No. Why is this? She is supplied with food from her colonies and other foreign countries." Both Mr. Read and the German pedant miss the most important point. No amount of protection will bring the labourer back to the land. The pedagogue might have continued: Has a nation ever remained vigorous for long without a thriving peasantry? No. What about the English peasantry? It is vanishing from the face of the earth.

It is a pitiful thing that our British Merchant Navy should be manned so largely by foreigners as is shown to be the case; but is it not even more pitiful to read over and over again accounts of seamen of our Royal Navy drowned from sheer inability to swim? If men on their own account are so reckless as to occupy their business in great waters without the qualification, is it quite impossible for a paternal Government to enforce it upon them?

An accident lately recorded in landing from a steamer on the Clyde may well serve to draw attention to a very real danger lightly incurred by tourists in the West of Scotland in getting from the steamers to the shore. In the case in point the landing was made at Wemyss Pier by means of a gangway. Something, either the railings of the steamer or the gangway itself, collapsed, and nearly a score of persons fell into the water. All were rescued without serious injury, and may think themselves very kindly used by fortune or by Providence in escaping so well. But there is another source of danger, at least as great, that passengers in these steamers landing at small places on the islands off the coast constantly incur. These landings are often made by means of small row-boats, and the descent from the only relatively steady steamers into the dancing cockle-shells is really exceedingly dangerous. The wonder is that accidents do not occur more often, and we may hope that the recent affair at Wemyss Bay may show all parties the need of greater caution.

On Friday and Saturday last a representative team from the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford played a cable match at chess with the American Universities of Yale, Harvard, Princeton, and Columbia. The result was a win for England by the handsome margin of 4½ to 1½. The chief features of the contest were Mr. Tattersall's clever attack—which ended in a draw, thanks to a stubborn defence and shortness of time—Mr. Softlaw's able play, and the victory of Mr. Wiles, a very young Cambridge student, who acquitted himself like a master. This was at the British Chess Club. At the City Club the National Tournament is again proceeding, after being interrupted by the Easter holidays. Blackburne and Trickman are as we write running neck and neck for first place, and among the amateurs Ward seems likely to be the most distinguished. Preparations are well advanced for the International Tournament to be opened at Paris next month in connection with the exhibition.

THE SPRING FIELD TRIALS.

THE smallness of the field and the few running dogs at the Kennel Club's field trials this spring remind one of the very first field trial that was ever held. Upon that occasion, in 1865, there were sixteen pointers and setters entered. The trial was held at Southill, in Bedfordshire, and it was arranged in connection with a dog show. The idea was that no dog ought to take a dog show prize that could not prove himself a fit companion for the gun. That is an idea which it would be well for the dogs, and well also for the Kennel Club, were it put into practice in these days. It is possible that half—perhaps three parts—of the unpopularity of pointers and setters is due to the action of the Kennel Club in encouraging the continued existence of nominal sporting dogs which are of no use, or at least not necessarily of any use, in sport.

Possibly this neglected duty is answerable, more or less, for the great falling off in the number of entries at the Kennel Club's field trials. The club is not altogether popular with sportsmen, and the formation during the past year of an International Kennel Club on a very large scale has evidently brought the fact home to the authorities. Perhaps it is unfair to rake up old history just at a time when the Kennel Club has brought off some most successful, if very small, sporting events, which of themselves are in no way tainted with the dog show atmosphere. But it seems always to be necessary to remind the average shooting man that a field trial



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has nothing whatever to do with dog shows. There is much confusion on the subject, and if upon the moors you mention



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FASKALLY BRAGG AND FASKALLY BELLE.

"C.L."

field trial dogs it is not two to one against the retort that having once had some "show dogs" they have been for ever given up in disgust. That some field trial dogs are also show winners seems only to confuse the matter worse. The fact is, shooters who hurry off to the moors for August 12th are always on the rush, and they have not time to get up the dog question thoroughly; and,

truth to tell, that is not to be wondered at, for reports of field trials are not always to be understood, even by old field trialers. Before finishing with the field trials of the year a protest must be made under this head, but that will come better when dealing with the various stakes where errors have been made and confusion worse confounded.

My reason for referring to the Southill trials is this: At that time, and even for some years afterwards, the judges were of opinion that they could carry "form" in their memory. To such an extent was this believed in by them, that two of the dogs entered at Southill, which were not there, were tried upon another occasion by one of the two judges, and given points in competition just as if they had been present. Years afterwards, at Bala, the same thing to a much smaller extent was done by Mr. Walsh, the late editor of the *Field*, who, much to some people's disgust, placed dogs without bringing them directly or indirectly

together. It was like running the Derby on two successive days. It was worse, for in the latter case you might use a stop watch, but no stop watch will measure the variations of scent. All this absurdity has long ago been eliminated, and field trials to-day are unquestionably conducted in a way that gives the judges every chance of discovering the best dog. They are run very much on the system adopted in coursing; the draw brings the dogs together in braces, by chance, but after the first round of the card has been got through it would now be considered very unusual indeed if dogs were placed without meeting each other directly or without meeting each other by means of a third dog; thus A. and B. having both met C., it is possible to judge between them by means of the comparison of each with C.

Some people have expressed the opinion that the war is answerable for the falling off of entries at the Kennel Club field trials, but the English Setter Club field trials the week before do not support that view. The fact is, it is becoming recognised more and more that the Kennel Club has placed itself in a responsible position, and thereby undertaken the care of the various breeds of dogs, and, moreover, that it has been most unfortunate in its treatment of sporting dogs. Protests in the form of field trial clubs, such as have nothing whatever to do with the Kennel Club, have become numerous of late, but it is doubtful whether any real good to the breeds of sporting dogs will be done until every dog show winner has his prizes held in abeyance until he has shown up at a field trial and done creditable work there.

Looking back is not always a pleasant task, and there is much to regret in looking backwards at the field trials, their supporters, and the dogs that used to be seen at them. Mr. Heywood-Lonsdale, Mr. Barclay Field, Sir Vincent Corbet, Lord Combermere, and Mr. Tom Slatter used to be the great supporters of field trials, and they are all dead. Then as to the



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THE WINNERS OF THE BRACE STAKES. "COUNTRY LIFE."

dogs, the best that can be said for the moderns is that they are more even. Inbreeding has told its equalising tale, both with setters and pointers, and a big dog is a rare exception; a big one which is as good for his size as a good little one is unknown. This is a certain indication of too finebreeding, and there is verification in the number of false points recorded during the trials. Some of the old breakers who have been to these events for thirty years or so say that there are no such dogs as there were, and an inspection of a

team, in kennel, belonging to one of the most successful field trialers seems to indicate the reason why. They are mostly too fine, too small in the bone, too highly bred if you will, but they do not look like doing a long day's work at anything of a pace. They are two-hour dogs nearly all of them, and two-hour dogs are not treasures beyond price upon the moors. One thing is quite clear—the longer breeders continue on the lines they are going the finer will the setters and pointers become, and the more difficult will it be to revive the breeds. The fault has been with the dog shows. They have set the type—a type of unbreakable noseless animals—but it is one thing to set a type and another to keep to it. The objection to breeding to type from parents untried at work is that degeneration sets in with an absence of constitution. The greatest proof of constitution with horse or dog is that it has been able to stand high training. Without this safeguard the most consummate judges of external form could not maintain a type. Like begets like, it is true, but it is likeness attenuated, not likeness robust. Mr. W. Arkwright, Mr. B. J. Warwick, Mr. A. E. Butter, and Sir Watkin Wynn are now the field trial champions. They have taken the place of those founders of field trials whose names have been mentioned, and it is not for want of enthusiasm if they have not quite such dogs as some that ran years ago.

Headquarters this year, as for several years past, was the Great White Horse at Ipswich, and the meet was Captain Pretyman's



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THREE CHEERS FOR CAPTAIN PRETYMAN.

"COUNTRY LIFE"

beautiful estate on the Felixstowe Road. Orwell Park abounds with partridges; there are red legs, of course, but it is a curious fact that although red legs are never satisfied at running the length of a parish if they can run two, in the shooting season, yet this is not so when the birds are paired. They certainly are as good for field trials in every way as the grey birds, and their running habits are not at this time of year in evidence more than those of the grey birds. Orwell Park is, certainly, as good a place for field trials in the spring as can be found in England, for in spite of its situation in the Eastern Counties it is forward land, and has cover for the birds when elsewhere in most places there is not enough to hide a mouse.

Only eleven ran for the Field Trial Derby, a stake which has upon one occasion had nearly thirty runners. First and second went to setters, third and fourth to pointers. Curiously, both the setters were own brothers, bred by Mr. E. Bishop. They are by Sybarite Sam out of Bloss of the West. This is a great score for their breeder, as it is not often that puppies sent to different breakers come out even, and it less often happens that they are first and second in a puppy stake. Compton Sam, the winner of £60, belongs to Mr. Warwick, he who lent his estate for the spaniel trials last December. He is deservedly popular, and seems determined to have the best dogs possible. Cherry Picker, the second prize puppy, belongs to Mr. F. Lowe, the oldest field trialer, with the exception of Edward Armstrong, who put in an appearance at these trials. Mr. Scratton's Persis, from Devonshire, came third, in charge of the breeder of the two winning setter puppies, but not hunted by him, and Mr. Mawson's Cycle of Bromfield was fourth.

Compton Sam, without any great pace, is a good game finder, and took the lead very easily. He ran out of hand the week before at the English Setter Club trials, after doing probably the best work of the year in his run with Ightfield Gabby, the winner amongst the puppies at those trials. As it was, Captain Heywood-Lonsdale's brace, as well as Mr. Lowe's Cherry Picker, second at Ipswich, own brother to Sam, were placed above him at the former meeting.

There were eleven runners also in the All-Aged Stakes, but the ancients failed to improve upon the work of the puppies. Mr. A. E. Butter's dogs, which last autumn on the moors ran against, and were defeated by, a team of Mr. Warwick's, now turned the tables, and came out first and second. The winner, Faskally Bragg, also won at the Setter Club's meeting, so that he ranks first so far, although his work has not been better than, if as good as, that done by the two puppies before mentioned at the English Setter Club's trials. Second fell to Bragg's own brother, Syke of Bromfield. Mr. Cheetham's Irish setter, Honeysuckle, was third, and Mr. W. Arkwright was fourth with Saxpence.

In the Brace Stakes there were seven entries. It is to be remarked that one of the sporting papers has fallen into the error of printing the card as if one brace was drawn against the next following brace upon the card. This suggests that four dogs are run together. Of course this is not so; for obvious reasons braces have to be judged separately by the work done by each brace, and this has to be remembered by the judges as best it can, and compared with what is done by other braces run at other times. It will be seen, therefore, that the competition between braces is a matter of chance; one may have a good field, with good lying and good scent, another may have a field with no lying and no scent, and even, upon occasion, with no birds. Given a moderate brace of dogs, they stand a better chance in a good field than a really great brace stand in bad ground. A brace stake would always be the most interesting event if it were not for this one drawback. We all know how scent varies in different fields. Hounds can run like "greased lightning" up to a certain point, then up go their heads and they cannot follow a fox a yard. Those who work braces at field trials run the chance of either kind of ground; but, after all, there are some dogs which never seem to fall upon bad ground; after much experience it is not very unsafe to say that those are the dogs with the noses.

Mr. B. J. Warwick won with his brace of English setter bitches Compton Dinah and Compton Beauty, the latter a half-sister to the first and second puppies. They did moderately fast and very careful work, with no faults except a false point to each. Mr. Butter's pointers Faskally Bragg and Faskally Belle were second. They did some very good work, but they also made some mistakes, and it is doubtful whether Messrs. Salter and Doyle, who were the judges, saw some of these. Mr. F. Lowe's brace ran a capital trial at the first time of asking, but upon a second attempt one of them flushed birds without dropping, which was, after all, no more than Mr. Butter's pointers did, and, besides this, the latter did not always care about backing. There is a protest to be made against the methods of reporting field trials adopted by some of the papers. The way it is done is not exactly conducive to a belief, by the ordinary game shooter, in field trial dogs. For instance, here is a sentence: "After allowing birds to escape, the next brace, Damsel of Salop and Ightfield Top, behaved very well on a rabbit." To say the least,

this might suggest that it was improper for the dogs to let birds escape. On another occasion the same writer complimented a dog for dropping to hand "without the least persuasion." It would be interesting to know what is "persuasion" if the hand is not. The dog should have dropped to game without the necessity of any persuasion by the hand. Another report is far more amusing, but even more confused. The winner, Compton Sam, is not in the card to start with, consequently, by all the rules of field trials, he ought not to have run. Then the writer has not the smallest idea of the difference between a "beat" and a "cast," and constantly makes one dog outwork the cast another has begun, which, until lately, was a method of expression unknown to the field trialer as well as to the shooter, and conveys no meaning whatever.

Our Portrait Illustration.

THE COUNTESS OF MINTO, whose portrait forms our frontispiece, is the wife of the popular Governor-General of Canada. Her husband has had a distinguished career, and his present position is not his first official connection with Canada, for from 1883 to 1886 he was military secretary to the Marquess of Lansdowne when the present Secretary for War filled the post now occupied by the Earl of Minto.

Advice and Advisers about . Killing Driven Game.—II

IF any one piece of advice has been given to shooters more often than others it is that they should keep their eyes fixed on their game and never look at the sights of the gun. Up to a certain point this is very sound and good advice; but it has fallen in the hands of theorists, who have done it to death. They have exceeded all common-sense in their insistence that a shooter should be independent of his sights and the rib of his gun. Their formula is this: Look at your bird, throw up the gun, and pull trigger as the stock touches the shoulder. No worse advice was ever given to a beginner. I say this knowing very well that there are plenty of shooters who can carry out the prescription to a certain extent; that is to say, on game going straight away, on rabbits rushing across a ride, and even on birds crossing, or coming over at a slow pace, it is not unusual to find people shooting successfully in this way. There have been and no doubt there are performers with the gun who can shoot rabbits very well from the hip; but nobody ever heard of a successful grouse driving shot who adopted that method; and, as that is so, I submit it does not do to say that methods suitable for some game are necessarily suitable for all. Those who put forward the cricket bat and the billiard ball theories to apply to shooting fast-driven game are interesting. The theory that the hand that catches the cricket ball is never seen by the player, who looks only at the ball, is very nearly appropriate to the argument, but not quite.

Why not would take up too much space to discuss, but the broad fact is that those who can catch a cricket ball well cannot always shoot moderately. They find that to put out the hand to meet a cricket ball and to put forward the gun not to meet, but that something else (the shot) may meet, a flying partridge, are different. There are plenty of good shots who have grown to be unconscious of using their sights; but this by no means proves that they do not use them, nor does it show that what they see so often repeated does not regulate and control and improve their method of bringing up the gun; but these good shots have nothing to learn, and advisers are presumably addressing those who have.

It is not absolutely certain that the advice to look at the game and nothing else is sound or even possible. Granted that when the game is focussed with both eyes, and the gun is brought up, it is not necessary to look at (that is to focus) the sights in order to see them. It is impossible not to see anything that is brought between the eye and something the eye is looking at. This being so, the eyes are able to see the relative positions of the sights and the game without effort of any kind; why should not the knowledge thus acquired be made use of? Those who say that all aiming is wrong, nevertheless get their cheeks down on to their stocks in the position to make aiming possible. Unless there is something wrong with their eyes when that position is taken up, they cannot help seeing, by the sights, how the gun is pointing, and it does, therefore, appear rather absurd to say that no use is to be made of an assistance to straight shooting that is there automatically to help every time the gun is put up. It is questionable how far it is right to say that a good shot looks at the game alone. Granted that he does look at it if he is going to shoot at it, the question arises—what does he look at when he is going to shoot 12 ft. or 15 ft. to right or left or in front of moving game? Those who advocate looking at the game declare the shot is certain to go to the place focussed by the eyes; but this theory breaks down when we remember that with fast birds the last thing we want is that the shot should go where the game is at the moment when the shot leaves the barrel. In order to direct the gun ahead of the game, do the eyes cease to focus it and fix on a movable point ahead of the game? That clearly must be so if no aim is taken, if no use is made of the sights, for without the latter it would be quite impossible to measure with the eye inches, feet, or yards in front of driven game. It appears, then, that those who advocate looking at the game without aiming, because the shots are sure to follow the focus, are going a little too far. It is a very difficult thing for a shooter to determine exactly what he does himself. The writer has never been able satisfactorily to settle whether his own eyes continue to focus the game when he sees his sight pointing yards ahead of it; but he is very well aware that he uses his sight in order to judge the allowance of distance to be made. This, however, could be as well done whether the focus was upon a point ahead of the game or upon the game itself.

Those who assure young shooters that they should never aim in the sense of alignment seem to think that this is a longer operation than the means they

advocate; but this does not seem to be so. Neither can fire until the gun touches the shoulder, and a knowledge of the relative position of sight and game is certainly acquired more quickly than the trigger can be pulled. They seem to confuse this alignment with an after correction of the gun when it is at the shoulder; but this is a totally different affair, and, of course, it takes time. The value of alignment does not appear to the writer to be because it enables a correction of aim, but because it is a constant lesson in the way in which to bring up the gun so as to require no after adjustment.

The manager of one of the shooting schools near London declares that there is but one way of shooting. He has watched a great many crack shots who go to his place for practice at overhead clay birds, and he says, although many are of opinion that they fix on a spot ahead of the object, and throw up the gun and fire at that point as if it were a fixed mark, that as a matter of fact they do nothing of the kind; that their barrels, if watched, like those of everybody else, will be seen to be making a race of it against the object to be hit—that is to say, they race to lead the bird. It may be said, however, that as this race goes on when the gun is coming to the shoulder as well as when it is there, that tip-top shooting form will get it over at the exact instant the stock touches the shoulder. But neither crack shots nor anyone else are always in tip-top form, and it is the worst possible fault to try to do more or to try to be quicker than changeable "form" permits. Accuracy is the first thing to be aimed at; the more often that is attained the quicker it will come. Instead of saying "do not use the sights, because crack shots may be able to shoot without them," it would be more helpful to say, use the sights without looking for them, because they are put there to assist, where you cannot fail to see them, and because a beginner wants every advantage he can take; and because, also, the more frequently a shooter uses his sights the more quickly he will be able to do without them—that is to say, if anybody who shoots really well does do without them entirely.

The try-guns have somewhat gone out of fashion; at least, although they are still greatly used for the purpose of getting the right bend and cast off or on for a shooter, there are few gunmakers now who attempt to do what nearly all once did attempt with the try-gun. Gunmakers for some time after the introduction of these instruments acted on the principle that the weapon should be so bent or cast off as to counteract personal error in the working of hand and eye—that is to say, the gun was made to shoot to some spot to which the shooter did not know it was aiming. This was the principle of relying upon the eyes *not* to do their own proper work. Force of habit, perhaps, had coached a shooter into one particular way of putting up a gun. With the try-gun as first put in his hands he was at a loss, it was, perhaps, so bent that he could not see where he

was going to shoot, and many of the gunmakers a few years ago, instead of altering the bend or cast, so as to facilitate an alignment, altered the gun so that if the shooter aimed the same upon the next occasion the shot would go into the proper place, in spite of an aim apparently to the shooter at another point. This system was only fitted for shooters with uneven eyes, those which are crossed, or do not work truly together, and then only when the left eye could not be closed. The result to most shooters was that when they got their new guns they instantly began to strive to see where the gun was actually aiming; it was habit to do so, and as they succeeded by degrees, and aimed the gun correctly by looking along it, they found that they could only do so by getting into some awkward or unnatural position. When the error was a fault of the hand, such as a movement, the fitting by the try-gun necessitated a continuance of the fault, or the penalty was missing. When it was a fault of the eyes that was dealt with, there was more sense in altering the weapon to shoot where the eyes were not directing it to; but the later and better method is to shoot with one eye instead of trying to use two odd ones.

It is probable that the fashion of driving game has changed the right methods of handling a gun. In the days before 1870 pigeon-shooting set the fashion, and in order to be a quick pigeon shot a gun had to be used that compensated for the rise of the pigeon by its setting. A straight long stock was the rule, a gun which, if shot at the target, placed the centre of its shot a foot or more above the point of aim. It was then almost physically impossible to align a good pigeon gun, so straight were they; the eye took a line from $\frac{1}{2}$ in. to 1 in. above the false breech to the foresight. This method of setting resulted in wonderfully quick shooting, so that many a pigeon fell within 2yds. of the trap. It was necessary to shoot a foot or two in front of a quartering pigeon, but that was all. Now with game coming down wind, at any sort of pace, the line of its flight has to be kept so very much more accurately, and as well there is the increased necessity for true judgment of distance. Neither of these things can be done as well without sights as with them, nor as well with the foresight and rib of a shot-gun as with the more accurate sighting of an express rifle. The bull's-eye of the running deer at Bisley is only the size of a grouse, and yet, at 100yds., this is hit time after time, not with shot spreading over a square yard, but with a single bullet. It is very doubtful whether anyone ever attempted to shoot the running deer without sights, and yet if there was no assistance in the rib and foresight of a shot-gun there would be no assistance in the back and fore sight of a rifle for shooting a quick right and left at the running deer. It is probable that the "no aim" theory is a survival of the pigeon-shooting days, before driving game altered the necessities.

ARGUS OLIVE.

THE ROOK'S FAMILY.

"His airy nursery in the neighbouring elm
Constructs the social rook."

IN our first picture we see THE AIRY NURSERY, and in the second THE OCCUPANT. On Valentine's Day, or as soon after as the weather permits, our social rook begins the spring cleaning of the nursery. It is a formidable operation. Old nests are pulled to pieces with energy that is almost fury, and—when the owners happen to be away—new nests are

pulled to pieces also with a haste that looks very like conscious larceny. But the politics of a rookery at nesting-time are hard to follow, though Jameson raids appear to be the rule. While the industrious rook is afield gathering sticks, the idle rook stays at home and steals what the other gathered the day before. Thus when Prior writes of "an honest rook" and Gay of "the thievish rooks," both were justified; for a rookery shelters the just and the unjust. Every now and then the whole crew will



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THE AIRY NURSERY.

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assemble and noisily scatter to pieces the nest which some couple have laboriously built, and it pleases the ornithological moralist to conclude that this is outraged society punishing the rook who stole sticks. So mote it be.

Anyway, from one cause or another, the spring cleaning of the social rook's airy nursery is a very wasteful process, though nothing is really lost in Nature, and, as Gilbert White remarks, "the twigs which the rooks drop in building supply the poor with brushwood to light their fires." Man, or rather boy, also finds it profitable to glean after the rooks at another season. When the walnuts are ripe the rooks know all about it. Very clumsily, and with much wing-flapping, they pull off the nuts and fly with them to some neighbouring tree, a tall elm for choice, where they proceed to crack the shells by hammering at the suture with their bills. The first blow very often knocks the nut out of the bird's grasp, and the village boys soon learn under which elm tree to look for walnuts. Some enthusiastic friends of "the farmer's friend," the rook, deny that he ever steals nuts or eats aught but earth-worms, wire-worms, cockchafer grubs, and "noxious insects" generally; but science has not given our particular *Trypanocorax*, which is the scientist's short for rook, the distinctive name of "frugilegus," "the fruit stealer," for nothing. No, let us gladly grant that the balance between man and the rook is on the bird's credit side, but, as candid friends, let us also admit that our friend has his weaknesses, especially for wheat, eggs, fruit, turnips, young poultry, game birds, and even leverets. Also, during a drought, the rook will catch fish in a shrunken pool, and he knows when to go crab catching at the seaside after the retreating tide. But the cockchafer grub, which devastates the pastures, and the dreaded wire-worm—the immature stage of the quaint "skip-jack" beetle which is always tumbling on its back and shooting itself up again with a click—are the rook's favourite food, and the good which he does among these Boers of the field justifies the fondness which we all have for this sober-gaited bird and the value which we attach to our rookeries, even going to the length of believing that disaster is in store for the house whose rooks desert it. Yet the birds can be as capricious as cats in their choice of residence, abandoning a really fine rookery, for no apparent cause, to go and build in a wretched

are doubtless pleasing to the ears of their mates but resemble the noises which one might produce by hiccoughing into a cornet. Also, the male rook at times deliberately essays to sing, but the result is, like salad dressed with castor oil, peculiar rather than pleasant. Curious chuckling and gobbling sounds also proceed from a rookery, both at this season, when the male birds are feeding the sitting hens, and later, when both parents are stuffing their young. In our second illustration may be seen one squab who has been comfortably stuffed and



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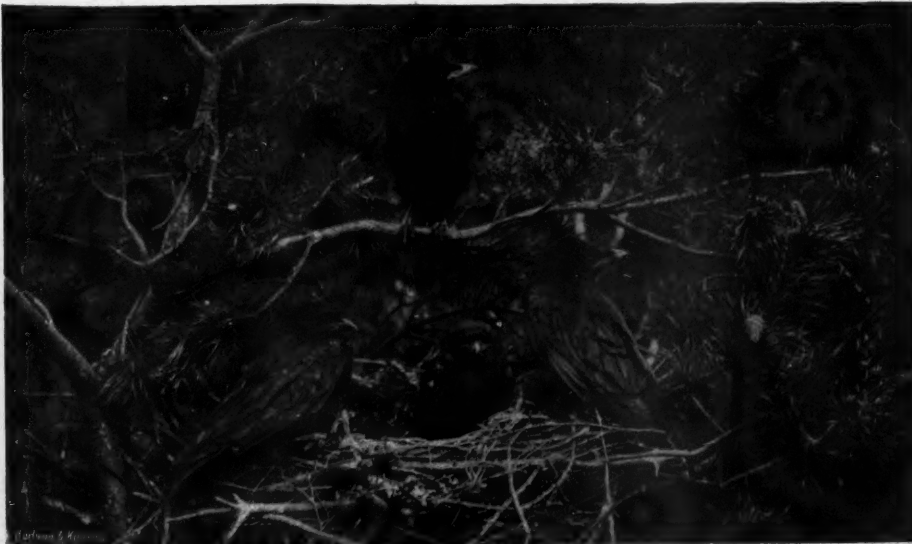
THE OCCUPANT.

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is now dozing the doze of the replete. But at feeding-times a close observer shall notice the strange community in young, and, alas! wives, which prevails in a rookery, the same male bird being certainly a welcome visitant at more nests than one. In the same way, in India, you may see half-a-dozen old crows all feeding the same young crow, or even the same young Koel cuckoo, for no other apparent reason than that he is "black as a crow."

And the distinction between our own various black birds is one which few of us observe. We all say "straight as the crow flies" when we mean the rook, and we put up a "scarecrow" to frighten rooks. The poets mean rooks, too, when they indulge in the frequent reference to "blackening trains of crows"; while one, Mackay, who says that "The rooks upon the castle towers caw merrily all day," certainly means jackdaws. How, then, can rooks be distinguished? Very easily, when they are a year old, by their bare whitish faces; for in rookdom it is callow youth which wears whiskers and mature age that has a smooth cheek. When rooks are young, however, as in these illustrations, they can only be identified with certainty by turning up some of the body feathers. If the bases of these are grey, the bird is a rook; if they are white, a crow. A rook can also be distinguished from a crow by the shape of its bill; but unless you have a crow handy for comparison this is uncertain. In the family group which is WAITING FOR FATHER, the youngster perched above the nest is obviously a rook, while a naturalist, seeing only the photograph of his brother below to the left, would unhesitatingly declare the latter to be a crow, the slight foreshortening of the bill giving it the

true crow shape. In the next picture, where we see the same family brought down from their high estate at the top of the elm and huddled ON THE COLD STONES, the rook characteristic is well brought out in each. The effect is heightened by the aspect of misery which has settled upon the group, for the rook, even in his blithest moments, wears a lugubrious mien. He seems to attend each wire-worm's funeral in the dual capacity of undertaker and executor, or rather executioner. Perhaps there is a verbal



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WAITING FOR FATHER.

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clump of larches, or refusing to occupy splendid avenues where they would be welcomed and protected, while at another time they will persist in colonising trees in a public street, or even build between chimney-pots, until "the authorities" have to hire a man to shoot them down. Yet Mr. Cecil Rhodes has successfully acclimatised 500 English rooks at his home in South Africa.

Everyone knows that rooks caw, but from the middle of January onwards they indulge in various quaint sounds which

connection with the rook's funereal appearance when they say in Norfolk that a dark and gloomy day is very "rookey."

As the birds grow older their whitened faces—which naturalists used to believe were rubbed clear of feathers by constant poking into the ground—suggest the unblemished "choker" of the Established Church, while their sleek and glossy figures betoken ownership of a fat living from much glebe, and their slim legs almost raise them to the gaitered dignity of episcopal rank. With the change of aspect comes a suitable improvement in manner. They no longer shuffle and flop or huddle together, as in MOURNFUL INFANCY, but stride independently erect, with an important waggle of the body at each step; and their funereal mien is replaced by a staid solemnity of countenance befitting their clerical garb. For this reason one almost regrets, as a lapse from good manners, the ill-considered levity which the rook affects at this season of the year. A skirt-dancing bishop would be a painful sight; and when rooks "dive and tumble in a frolicsome manner," or utter gurgly, squeaky notes of love, one feels that appearances in this wicked world are most deceptive.

One sees the rook's character at its worst, perhaps, when he attends the soup kitchen which charitable persons organise for the starving birds in winter. His natural cunning forbids him to advance and take his share with the sparrows, starlings, and blackbirds. Instead, he waits upon the bare branch of a neighbouring tree until a sparrow makes off with a large piece of bread. Then the rook pretends to be a hawk, and with much hurtling of black wings swoops after that sparrow, who is glad to drop his loot and escape into the nearest bush. At one gulp the rook disposes of the sparrow's breakfast and returns to the branch, on which he wipes his beak and waits for the next sparrow. Yet in extremely severe weather, which drives the feathered world to close in a small circle round the farm buildings, when the dung-heaps

are black with laborious rooks seeking to stay the pangs of hunger on anything that is not frozen, the best side of the rook's character sometimes comes out, for the stronger may be seen to carry scraps of food to the weaker, a display of affectionate solicitude which is very rare outside humanity. This may be explained, perhaps, by the fact that the rook's prolonged period of courtship begins in

autumn, and the feeding may be a sexual endearment, such as takes place when the hen bird is sitting.

Another striking feature of the rook's character is his implacability in pursuing and persecuting a bird of prey. Not even the missel-thrush so persistently harries a hawk, while if an owl be so unfortunate as to tumble into daylight and catch the eye of a single rook he will soon wish that he had never been born. Away goes the rook in pursuit with loud caws, and as the wretched owl flees, swooping and wheeling around the fields, more and more rooks join in, until it is a "blackening train" indeed which the hapless night-bird drags after him at each twist and dive. It is always the object of the rooks to drive their enemy—by persistently swooping at him—to the ground, when he would be quickly pecked and torn to pieces. Any large bird of strange aspect shares the same fate as hawk or owl, and the story of the escaped cockatoo, who, when mobbed to death by rooks, was heard repeating "One at a time, gentlemen, please," might well be founded upon fact.

But perhaps the characteristic with which we are all most familiar in the rook is his wary shyness. Apart from the watchful sentinel on the tree top—who is very seldom absent from his post—every rook feeding in a field seems to have eyes all round his head, eyes, too, that can tell the difference between a gun and a walking-stick at 200yds. You may swing your firearm as a walking-cane, or shoulder your stick as a gun; but you will not deceive the rook. In addition to a "high



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ON THE COLD STONES.

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A WATCHFUL GROUP.

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order of intelligence," he has all the advantages of gregarious habits. When one rook has been shot, the whole rookery knows all about it, and they will clamorously recognise the shooter half a parish away. They will also notice whether he has his gun with him or not, and regulate their behaviour accordingly. To realise the wariness of the rook, you must spend a month or two trying to shoot a piebald specimen. Everyone knows how difficult it is to shoot any rook when the community has once become gun-shy; but the attempt to shoot a particular rook out of the flock is a feat of which you only begin to understand the difficulty after carrying a gun after him for a week or two. The secret is, of course, that forty birds have forty pairs of eyes, and the bird you want to shoot has thirty-nine friends with him, all on the look-out for danger. A glance at one of our photographs illustrates this. Of the seven young birds included in A WATCHFUL GROUP no two are looking in the same direction, and there is no point of the compass from which an approaching enemy would not be instantly detected. Multiply these seven pairs of eyes by any number that might make an average "flock" of rooks, and you can understand the difficulty of thinning their numbers to any appreciable extent by means of a shot-gun.

C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.



E. KAY ROBINSON.

A-MAYING.

I BETHOUGHT myself that the morrow was May Day. And with this statistical recollection, there came a yearning upon me to enjoy the spring air of the country-side, to quit town life and town-tinted foliage, and turn to the homely beauty of wayside flowers. The wish begat resolution. The morrow saw me up with the lark and trudging steadily from the provincial town of Bayfield towards the may-pole of Ashbury. Came I to the village Fenlake, at such a good round pace that it made my blood hotly contemptuous of the white, fleeting mists that were decking with sparkling pearls each leaf, each blade of grass that drew itself up to salute the rising sun. The cool, moist-air I lew freshly from the grassy plains that bordered the river Kelt. A cock, lord of the feathered flock at a neighbouring farm, proclaimed his matutinal authority on the time of day, and his clear call went echoing across the meadows. His challenge was answered at the sleepy river-driven mill, thence passed on to peaceful Milverton, slumbering amidst the drifting hazes which poured in silent cloud-forms into the half-hidden trees. Yet further, and I saw a cross, planed on a green amidst trees, whose massive trunks towered up to branches that were bursting with tender leaf. Of hewn stone and moss-covered, 'twas an old-world memory, buried in the silence of the morn.

On and on, across a rippling brook, whose banks were spotted with golden celandines; past a group of cattle, that slowly drew hoof and hoof from the muddy bed, and, clambering up the rude bank, whisked away with conscientious tails anticipated flies. Then by a church, music-dumb, but radiant with its mellow sunlit windows. Now, here and there, wreaths of smoke, curling blue from the village homes, close hidden by their ivy garments. Yet nobody a-maying, nobody but I.

A hill carries the road gently up, and by the side of the latter is a bench, just such a bench as many an aged year-worn peasant has sighed for when, returning home at night, his old bones have felt a-weary. All honour to the hand, the thought which placed it here; here—outside Trefferton village!

Walking again, close to Ashbury now, yet still no music, no procession to rifle the fields and meadows, but it is May Day and there is a may-pole at Ashbury. What's wrong? What's ado? Perchance I am late; they already deck the pole with the fairest blossoms of mead and wood, of hedgerow and stream. The woods, the many-hued, sweet-scented thickets, hide the village from me. I shall find them all there, all, high and low.

Ashbury at last; though why "at last"? Have I not already been a-maying that I should so thirst to see its symbol placed upon a village green? But alack-a-day, alack-a-day, what's this? A noble English green truly, set round about by many a snug, cosy home with roof of thatch or tile. A fine may-pole, girdled with red stripes and set in a bed of concrete, but bare, naked, with not one bough of pink or white may, not a bunch of kingcups or bluebells to do honour to Flora, Queen of Fruit and Flowers.

And yet the sun is proud in his strength, and yet there is not a man or a maid lent on a-maying. Ah, well, perchance the times have changed. I will hie me to the village inn.

"Good morning, landlady; you have a may-pole here?"

"Yes, sir, and a fine one."

"And when do they dress it?"

"Eh?"

"I mean, don't they keep May Day here?"

"Why, surely, the Squire is kindly, and he takes care that not one but a-many shall have that which shall please them. Tea and beer and lots to eat. Why, it was he as put up a new may-pole."

"Ah, that's very good; but do you not gather flowers and bring them home to the pole, and dance and dance about it till you're tired?"

"No-o, sir."

I went a-maying, and I went to a-maying, but I found the may-pole bare, though not the English hearts that dwelt around it.

As I turned homewards I thought of the past, that is lost in the vista which leads to Flora, goddess. I dreamt of the times when every village had its may-pole, and I awoke with the ordinance of the Long Parliament in 1644 that all may-poles should be removed still thundering in my ears. Ah, yes, removed,

MOURNFUL INFANCY.

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extirpated, like the one 100ft. high that used to rear its proud height where the church in the Strand now stands. It was a giant, a worthy representative of the London may-poles, and the last. But in the country-side, though few and far between, they still exist. Perchance the wheel of time will yet find them decked out as of yore, yet find them the hub of the merry dance.

NEIL WYNN WILLIAMS.

RED DEER IN NEW ZEALAND.

OF all the attempts at acclimatisation in different parts of the world, none claims the attention of the naturalist sportsman to a higher degree than the eminently successful experiment that has made two remote islands at the antipodes an ideal sportsman's paradise.

Though many of the details have appeared at various times in the Press of this country, no succinct account, illustrated by photographs of the animals and antlers, has, so far as the writer knows, been published over here. The following account has been drawn from official sources kindly placed at the writer's disposal by the Colonial Government, while the set of interesting

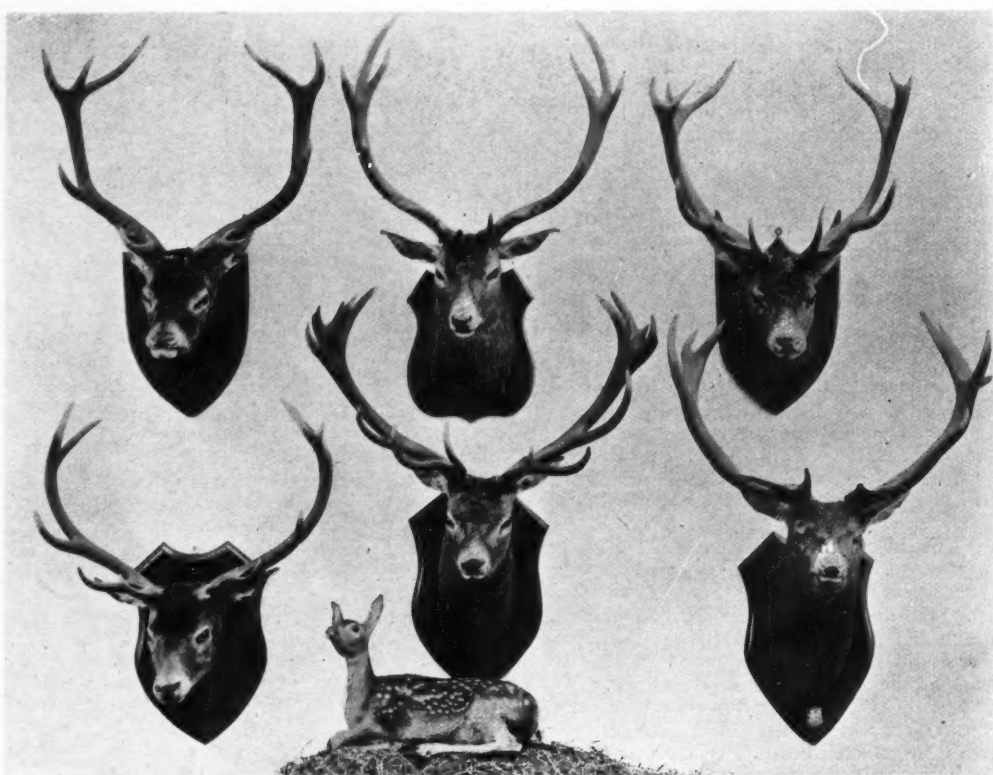


A SON OF THE EMPIRE.

photographs here reproduced was sent to him by the chairman of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society, Mr. A. J. Rutherford, with an interesting report written by Mr. T. E. Donne, traffic manager of the New Zealand Railway, who, as a life member of the association, has brought to book some very fine antlers.

Thirty-seven years ago the late Prince Consort, who, from his early youth, shared his elder brother's liking for forest fauna, on being approached by the London agent of the New Zealand Government, arranged that the proposed experiment of importing a few European red deer into New Zealand should receive Royal assistance, and six red deer, two stags and four hinds, were captured in Windsor Park, and, after being housed there for a short period, so as to prepare them for their long sea voyage, were sent to their new home. One stag and two hinds were shipped by the Triton to Wellington, New Zealand, where, after a passage of four months and seven days, the stag and one hind were landed in June, 1862, the other hind having died during the passage. Of the stag and two hinds which were despatched about the same time to Canterbury, on the Southern Island, only one of the latter reached its destination, and consequently the surviving female was sent to the Northern Island, where it joined the other lot that was provided with a stag.

At first the strangers appear to have been regarded as "white elephants," whose final destination had not been thought about. There was also considerable grumbling by a section of the public and by some of the members of the Legislature at the expense of their keep, for after being landed the deer were kept in confinement in a stable at Lambton Quay. At this juncture a Mr. Carter, a public-spirited settler, offered to defray the cost of conveying them to his station on the Wairarapa, and the proposition was gladly accepted by the superintendent of the province, and the deer were carted in their box—in which they had come from England—from Wellington over the Rimutaka



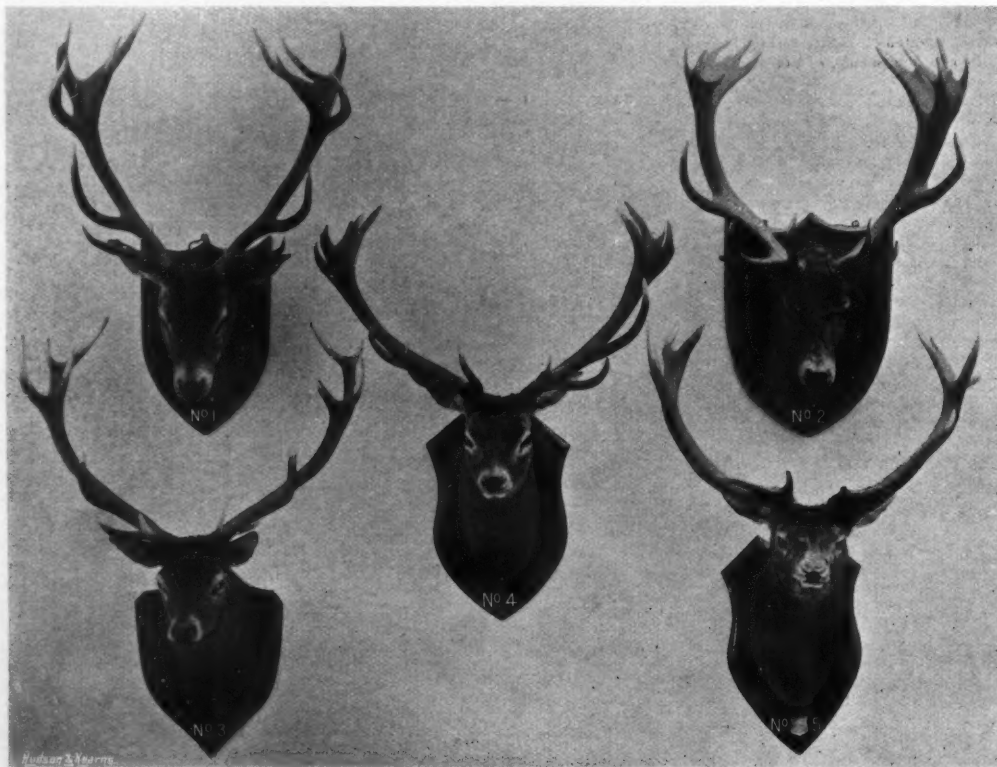
NEW ZEALAND RED DEER HEADS.

ranges to Mr. Carter's estate. There, after being kept in confinement for several weeks, they were liberated early in 1863, and, crossing the Ruamahanga River, they took up their abode on the Maungaraki ranges, where a suitable limestone formation and rich grasses account in all probability for the remarkably fine antlers which now grace these offsprings of Windsor Park deer. It must not be forgotten, however, that they were really partly of German origin, the Windsor blood having been freshened up on several occasions by importations from the Continent.

From these three deer have sprung the hundreds that now roam over the Maungaraki ranges, an area covering about fifty square miles of country. In their habits they have, of course, adapted themselves to the climatic features of their new home. Rutting occurs generally from March 20th until about April 14th, the period of gestation being a few days over eight months. The hinds produce their first calf in the third year, and thereafter breed annually. The stags, probably in consequence of a particularly favourable limestone soil, set up occasionally in their third year already fine antlers of ten points.

Intelligent interest in the deer was manifested from the first by a number of prominent settlers, and thirteen years ago the Wellington Acclimatisation Society was formed. Two of their late annual reports are now before the writer, and they contain very useful information, not only about deer, but also concerning trout, whose introduction into New Zealand waters has been crowned with such remarkable success.

Protected by specially enacted laws, and favoured by a vegetation and a temperate climate which seem to suit the *C. elaphus* "down to the ground," man's efforts to create for them a new home were further assisted by intelligent measures regulating the sportsman's proceedings. No stag may be killed without a licence, issued by the Acclimatisation Society. The first were granted in 1887, when six were issued. At first the shooting season opened on March 1st and closed on



SOME FINE HEADS.

May 10th. This, it was very soon seen, was not only too long a season, but as the deer begin to rut about March 20th, it included the whole of the mating season. The decision to limit shooting to the three weeks from April 7th to the last day of that month does great credit to the association, for it gives the large stags, who are the first to begin to roar, that very desirable chance to propagate their species before their proud trophies ring their death knell. It must be remembered that prior to rutting and subsequent to it the big stags hide themselves in the densest brush, where it is practically impossible to get at them. They come out into comparatively open ground only when stirred by the instincts of love and war, and it is then that their roar, similar to that of the Hungarian *Hirsch*, betrays them to the sportsman.

"The main desideratum of colonial stalkers is to secure a good head," says the report already referred to, and a truer or more sportsmanlike principle could not be framed. Scotch stalkers who kill their good stags before they have had time to mate, and then wonder why their stock is deteriorating, bring forward as an excuse the fact that the venison becomes unfit for the table, quite forgetting that not the quality of the latter but that of the antlers should be the chief consideration. They might well follow the intelligent reasoning of their brethren at the antipodes, and the sooner the fallaciousness of such "grazier" sentiments, reasonable enough in a man who fattens bullocks for the butcher, is recognised the earlier will the antler growth of Scotch deer cease to retrograde.

In New Zealand, as Mr. Donne informs the writer in a long letter, there is in consequence of the late shooting season a good deal of waste, for the venison is seldom used for food; but such would not be the result in Scotland, where means of transportation are generally at hand, and there the poor would not reject a haunch on account of its impaired quality, more particularly as smoking the venison takes off a great deal of the unpleasant flavour.

The weight of the deer is something about which even the New Zealand Acclimatisation Society can furnish only approximate figures, which they place at 400lb.—certainly no over-estimate,

to judge by the photograph of the living stag here reproduced. The three principal measurements of a stag killed in 1895 by Mr. Donne were as follows: Length from nose to base of tail, 6ft. 7in.; height at shoulder, 4ft. 6in.; girth, 4ft. 9in.

The same gentleman draws the writer's attention to the fact that some of the stags have on the brow thick curly hair "somewhat after the manner of German stags," while others have a very scanty supply. Of what excellent horn-producing qualities the soil and food must be is best proved by the fact that bifurcated tines are met with, and that one head seen by Mr. Donne had actually each of the twelve points bifurcated. This, so far as the writer knows, is a perfectly unique instance. Other kinds of deer have also been successfully imported; thus on Motu Tapu Island fallow deer are plentiful, and good heads are frequently obtained. Sambur and axis deer are also to be found, and Mr. Donne expresses the opinion that reindeer, moose, wapiti, and roe deer would also do well and find a congenial home in New Zealand.

As to shooting licences, each licence costs £1, and the holder is restricted to three stags, no stag to be shot carrying less than eight points. The stalking in the Wellington district, where it is said the heaviest antlers are procured, is done principally on private land, the owners as a rule generously placing a guide, horses, and other necessities at the disposal of visitors. New Zealand sportsmen seem imbued with a thoroughly sportsman-like spirit, the number of their quarry being a minor consideration in comparison to its quality, ambition centring itself on obtaining the best heads, with the largest number of tines, with the fewest shots.

As a help to those taking an interest in the size of these New Zealand antlers, I append a table of measurements of the six picked heads of which we give illustrations. The weight of antlers is remarkable and equals that of a good Hungarian stag, while it is superior to that of its progenitors from German forests, who, as we have heard, were introduced into Windsor Park in bygone years.

W. A. BAILLIE-GROHMAN.



HEAD WITH BIFURCATED BROW TINES.

TABLE OF MEASUREMENTS OF THE SIX HEADS ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS.

No.	Points.		Greatest length of ant. ers.	Greatest width between beams (inside).	Greatest width between points (up to tip)	Girth of Burr.		Girth between Brow and Bey.		Girth between Bey and Trey.		Girth above Trey.		Length Skull to a line between top tines.	Length of Tines.					
															Brow.		Bey.		Trey.	
	R. in.	L. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	R. in.	L. in.	R. in.	L. in.	R. in.	L. in.	R. in.	L. in.	Ft. in.	R. in.	L. in.	R. in.	L. in.	R. in.	L. in.
1	9	9	2 10 1/2	2 7 1/2	3 3			8 1/2	8	6 1/2	6 1/2	6	6	2 3	14 1/2	14 1/2	13 1/2	12 1/2	12	15 1/2
	(2 offers)																			
2	11	11	2 11 1/2	1 11 1/2	2 3			9 1/2	9 1/2	7 1/2	7	8 1/2	8	2 4 1/2	11 1/2	11 1/2	12	—	14	12
								(above 9)	8 1/2											
3	7	7	3 2	2 9	3 2 1/2			6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6	6 1/2	2 4						
4	8	9	3 2 1/2	2 1	2 8			—	6	6	—	5 1/2	5 1/2	2 6	13 1/2	12 1/2	12 1/2	11	16 1/2	15
5	6	7	2 11 1/2	2 9	3 4 1/2			8 1/2	9	6 1/2	7 1/2	7 1/2	—	2 2						
6	5	5	3 3	2 4 1/2	2 9	10 1/2	11 1/2	9 1/2	10 1/2	6 1/2	7 1/2	6	7 1/2	2 3	11	12	12 1/2	13 1/2	13 1/2	13 1/2

Girth of Tines of No. 6 ... Brow, Right 5in., Left 5 1/2in. Bey, Right 4 1/2in., Left 4 1/2in. Trey, Right 5 1/2in., Left 5in. Weight of antlers 18lb.

THE CLOGMAKER'S CAMP.

WAY down in the luxurious South of England I can well imagine that good people may regard the clogmaker's industry to be obsolete, as far as England is concerned; may think that the French peasant in his sabots is almost the last survival of the wearers of the "wooden shoon," celebrated in the Kerry Dance and song. But that is a delusion. Clogs are still worn largely in the factory districts of Lancashire, where the barbarous custom of "puncing" is not entirely obsolete. In this, I understand, two combatants, wearing clogs of the ordinary type, fight with their feet, kicking one another on the shins until one is maimed past kicking. Again, in Wales clogs are still

largely worn, and they have their uses. Easily slipped on and off, they are invaluable to peasant farmer's wife and daughters when they cross the muddy yard to milk the cows. Moreover, *experto crede*—for in my callow youth I succeeded in inducing indulgent parents to provide me with a pair, which the clog-maker almost refused to make, since they were unseemly wear for the parson's son—there is no footgear for the fine old sport of sliding which can touch clogs, and, when the irons are sharp, you can almost skate on them.

There is a Welsh dance, too, or there was one, called the "Dance of the Clogs," which partook of the nature of "Kiss in



SAWING INTO LENGTHS.

the Ring." In fact, "the clang of the wooden shoon," the clatter of wood and iron on cobbles or pavement, calls up for me many boyish reminiscences, and it was a real joy, not many years ago, on a coasting voyage from London to Belfast to come across a North of Ireland skipper who always wore clogs when seas were running and decks were sloppy, because, as he said, "If you wear them you never get 'co-feet'" (meaning cold feet, of which he spoke as if they were in the singular number and a specific complaint).

Hence comes it that it is a joy to see these photographs by a Herefordshire clergyman, embodying as they do the genesis of the clog, and the joy is intensified by the fact that I have myself seen the process of clogmaking, have let small tracts of woodland to the cloggers, have watched them at work with interest, have collected their money for my superior, and have repented myself of the evil in later days when the cloggers were gone, and the woodland, somehow or other, seemed less prolific of game than it was before. In fact, save that I cannot make a clog sole, I know all about it. One kind of wood, and one only, serves the clogmaker's purpose. It is the alder, sombre and damp-loving, which is good for very little else in this world except to make the stakes of the wattled fish-catching weirs which are still to be found on parts of our coast. For this purpose, as for clogs, it is valuable mainly because of its damp-resisting powers. As it will grow in the water, so it will stand in the water, when felled, longer

than any other wood. For clogmaking again it is particularly valuable because, while it will stand no end of wear, "it cuts like cheese," to borrow from the village carpenter a phrase, which means that it is worked easily.

The whole process smacks of the old world, and is full of interest; but, as has been more than hinted already, it is not by any means free from drawbacks. Let me recount the familiar experience of a landowner, small or great, who possesses an alder-growing tract. It has probably not been planted by him or his ancestors. It has been there always on the flat brink of the brook and in the boggy land, and it is not regarded with favour, for the alder is one of our few British trees which, if left to itself in congenial soil, or even in spite of efforts, will seed itself abundantly, and will encroach considerably year by year upon the surrounding ground, which will probably be rough and wet pasture. The cloggers—who are nomads all—know these tracts, and watch their growth.

There comes a day when the master of the house is asked to interview a wiry, weather-beaten fellow, true son of sun and wind and rain, who desires to make a bid for the alder patch or tract.



SPLITTING THE LOGS.

Be it said in justice to him that he is generally prepared to give a good price, for alder in fit condition for his needs is not to be come by everywhere or every day.

The bargain being struck, the price fixed, and the limits of the purchased tract having been defined, the cloggers set up their encampment, probably on some dry piece of ground close to the timber to be felled. There they fell the trees, and cut them into suitable lengths, and split them with wonderful skill, and shape them with their weird tools, and stack them in sugar-loaf piles to season in such manner that the wind may permeate them abundantly. It is all very pretty and picturesque, and, although the woodland is scarred for a while, that need cause no abiding melancholy, for where the alder has flourished once, there, of a certainty, the alder will flourish again, and very little else will grow at all.

Nevertheless, when the cloggers go away Egypt is usually glad at their departure. Their habits are nomadic, gipsy-like. They know all the secrets of the woodland off by heart, and, as a rule, they use their knowledge to their own advantage and to the detriment of the game preserver. Still everyone, except the keeper, would be sorry to see them abolished altogether.



NEARLY DONE.



THE NEW RACE OF PERSIAN CYCLAMENS.

IT is always interesting to watch a flower develop some fresh trait, maybe of variegation in its foliage, of colour, or of form. The new Papilio, or Butterfly, Cyclamens, shown recently at a meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society by the St. George's Nursery Company, Hanwell, are an extremely interesting departure from the type we have been familiar with from childhood's days. The flowers are characterised by wavy or crested margins to the petals, spoiling—some would declare—that pure outline which gives such charm to the original varieties, but this at least may be said, the fringed or crested Cyclamens are thoroughly new. We have nothing like them, and they probably mark a distinct break away, the inauguration of new groups, with fringed flowers and leaves. We hope raisers will endeavour to preserve the fine breadth and beauty that now distinguish the Persian Cyclamens of to-day. A muddled and merely crisped margin is not beautiful.

TURNING A MEADOW INTO A ROSE GARDEN.

We have received more than one question lately about making a Rose garden, in one case turning a meadow into a place of fragrant blossom. Autumn is, of course, the best time for carrying out this work. Fanciful designs are a mistake, but make simple beds, not too wide, say about 5ft., with grass walks sufficiently wide to allow of a water barrow being employed among the Roses. When the plan is selected, the beds should be marked out and the ground trenched not later than September. In forming a Rosery, much depends upon whether one begins in the right way. Good Roses cannot be grown if the soil is bad or the drainage defective. A knowledge of the condition of the meadow can alone determine this. If the soil—about 2ft. from the surface—appears water-logged, drainage in some form should be afforded. Of course it will only be necessary to drain the beds. When trenching the latter, chop up the turf into small pieces, and mix it with the top soil, thoroughly incorporating good animal manure and any burnt garden refuse available. There are many beautiful rambling Roses available, therefore arches and bowers should find a fitting place in a Rosery, and also Pillar and Weeping Roses add considerably to the general effect. Beds of one kind should be planted as far as possible. It is a mistake to select varieties from a Rose show, but go to the place where it is possible to see them growing. Many of the loveliest Roses seen at our exhibitions are quite unfitted for general garden culture. There should be at least a bed of each class, for instance, Mosses, Gallicas, Damask, the Alba or Maiden's Blush tribe, Hybrid Chinese, Bourbons, Polyanthas, China Teas, Noisettes, Hybrid Teas, Hybrid Perpetuals, etc. Reserve the best positions for the five last-named tribes, delegating to the outside beds summer-blooming kinds, single Roses, and others. Shelter from north and east is essential. Quick-growing firs, such as Scotch and Spruce, and Pinus austriaca, are the best trees to plant, forming in front of these a bank with roots, and some of the turf upon which to plant rambler Roses, or you might here locate a rock garden. Hedges of Penzance Briars, Rugosas, Scotch, Austrian, and other Roses would look well, and also act as a screen to the more tender groups. Many beautiful spring-flowering bulbs could find a home in the Rose beds without injuring the plants, unless overcrowding is practised. A few choice conifers might be planted, but they require careful use. If more are wanted, belts could encircle the Rosery, selecting the slowest growers for the south and west aspects. Make a point of visiting some well-established Rosery during the summer.

SWEET PEAS AND CANARY CREEPER AS A SCREEN.

In many gardens ugly blots occur which it is needful to hide, and this is usually accomplished in time by growing permanent creepers which never fulfil their mission until some years have elapsed. Kitchen gardens, farmyards, and pits must be hidden from view to preserve the beauty of the flower garden itself, and this may be realised by making good use of tall annual flowers. A beautiful screen may be formed with Sweet Peas and the Canary Creeper (*Tropaeolum canariense*). Firstly, well prepare the soil, and the best time for this is the winter, as then it has sufficient time to sweeten. Mix with it some well-decayed hotbed manure, and at this season (April) draw the drills for the seeds. Sow seeds to give flowers of distinct colours. This is preferable to mixtures, and a few well-chosen varieties are more effective than a medley, all different, some harsh and poor, others pure and pleasing, either to look at upon the plants or to gather for the house. Occasionally between the Sweet Pea groups drop in a



SHAPING HIS CLOGS.

seed or two of the Canary Creeper, and the result is a flowery screen for many weeks in the year. The practice of the writer is to plant out the Sweet Peas grown on turf under glass, as then they grow away vigorously, and are less prone to insect attacks.

THINNING OUT SEEDLINGS.

Early sown seeds will have germinated now, and the sowing of others will be proceeding, as the season so far has not been an ideal one for this work. We must again urge the importance of sowing the seed thin'y, and of leaving the seedlings with ample space to develop their true growth. This sermon we have preached until to many it must have become monotonous; but this note is prompted through the writer seeing in a garden recently seeds being sown as if they were so much mustard and cress. Of course it is impossible for the plants to make headway; they are throttled in their infancy, and even the survivors are unable to grow strongly and flower freely. Some kinds are less injured by thick crowding than others, but all suffer in the race for supremacy.

CALCEOLARIA VOLACEA.

A very graceful little plant of *C. volacea* was exhibited at a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society and attracted considerable attention. At the ends of the shoots were clusters of lilac-tinted helmet-shaped flowers, and though the colour is not pronounced, the charming way in which they are produced compels attention. This *Calceolaria* has been long in gardens, but rarely seen,



CLOGMAKER'S CAMP: FINISHED AT LAST.

and is perhaps one of the hardiest of the family. At one time quite a bush of it grew in the gardens at Ravensdale Park, in County Louth, enjoying its position at the foot of a south-east wall. Protection was, however, afforded by *Eugenia apiculata* bushes near to it on all sides, and every year a profusion of flowers was the reward; the soil of the garden is a granite loam. It would be very interesting to know whether any readers have this *Calceolaria* either in their gardens or plant-houses, and the best way to grow it.

HIPPEASTRUMS AT CHELSEA.

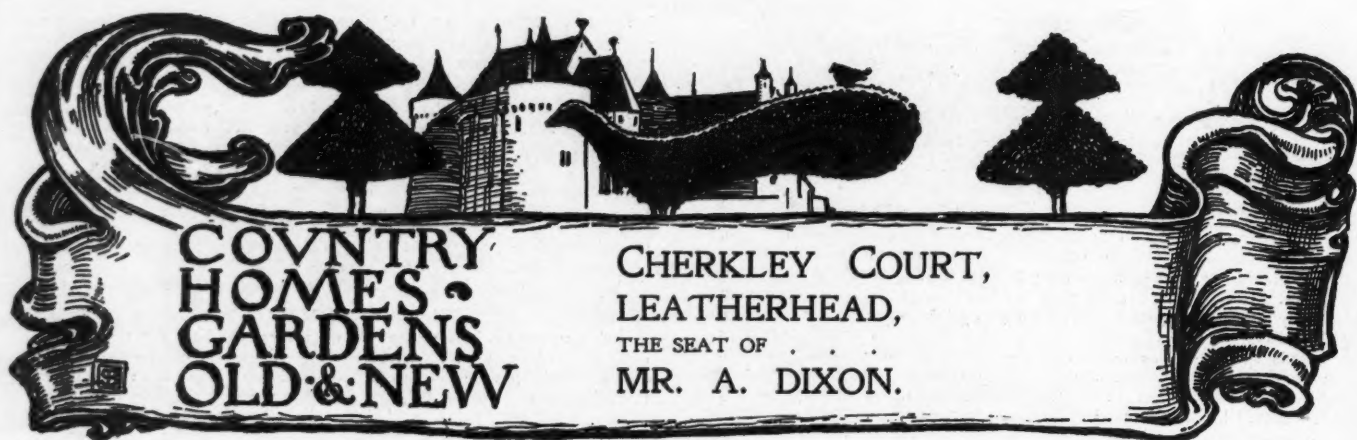
We were much pleased with the display of Hippeastrums, or Amaryllis, in the nurseries of Messrs. Veitch and Sons at Chelsea a few days ago, and all interested in these noble hybrids should journey to Chelsea and see this exhibition. Upwards of 1,000 bulbs are in the house, for the most part in full bloom, and one may imagine that there is a colour feast indeed spread out, from deepest crimson through vermilion to almost white, the flowers facing one, so to say, the segments broad and meeting one another, not as in the old types, which were starchy and weak compared to present-day productions. Of late years, thanks to the hybridist, many very handsome kinds have been raised, and impossible though it may appear to improve upon the race of this year, yet next season distinct kinds of even greater beauty than those at present in bloom will maintain our interest in the group, and warn us never to declare that perfection has been reached. This year there are hybrids of wonderful crimson colour, deep and effective, and white-flowered ones too, with a trace of green, which it is difficult to obliterate. A pure white Amaryllis, absolutely colourless, would be a precious gift. Hippeastrums are not difficult to cultivate, and though "luggy," that is the leaves appear after the spikes, they may be readily arranged with Ferns and foliage plants.

WORK IN THE GARDEN.

This is a busy time of the year, and success depends in a large measure upon finishing the work at the proper season, particularly in respect to seed sowing. Plants under glass will require much attention, as the sun is strong now and the soil in the pots quickly becomes dry, whilst a close watch must be kept for insect pests, which spread rapidly unless kept down by gentle fumigations or a free use of the syringe. Give a light shade now, and there are many excellent preparations available. Heavy shading is a mistake, as in almost darkness the plants become drawn and unhealthy. It is more satisfactory to have a blind which may be drawn up and down when required than a permanent shade. It will be advisable to mulch over the roots of all newly-planted trees, Roses, and so forth. Finish Rose pruning at once. Continue to sow seed, and remember the importance of thinning out seedlings.

CATALOGUES RECEIVED.—Garden and Conservatory Plants: W. Clibran and Son, Altrincham. Plants: V. Lemoine et Fils, 134, Rue du Montet, Nancy, France; F. R. Pierson and Co., Tarrytown-on-Hudson, New York, U.S.A. Double Hollyhocks: Webb and Brand, Saffron Walden. Floral Guide: H. Cannell and Sons, Swanley, Kent. Dahlias: J. Cheat and Sons, Crawley, Sussex. Garden Appliances and Aluminium Labels: F. Knoll, Leipzig-Lindenau.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are always pleased to assist our readers in matters of difficulty concerning the garden. We are also in touch with many first-class gardeners, and shall be happy to recommend one to any who may require the services of a reliable man.



THERE is no part of Surrey so beautiful as that which lies between Leatherhead and Dorking. Here the Mole flows through a land of entrancing beauty, the famous Mickleham Valley, with swelling hills on every side clothed with foliage of surpassing loveliness, crested by spreading downs, and margined by emerald meadows. The river follows its winding course, with many a deep and shallow, and the road that winds by it opens entrancing views at every step. Nature has here

put on her sweetest garb, and is, indeed, in verdure clad. We traverse the valley delighted with the beauty of the sylvan landscape; we ascend the hills to look over a prospect as fair as England, in its kind, can afford. It is a district famous for its many seats, for the richness of its pastures, for the splendour of its trees—its glorious cedars and immemorial yews—the sweetness and attraction of its gardens. Cherkley Court is in good company truly, for Norbury Park is its opposite neighbour;

Downside, Burford, the Denbies, Deepdene, historic Wotton, and many more such places are not far away. Evelyn loved the country, and praised its winter greenness, the goodly walks and hills, staded with yew and box, and many delights of its prospects. An historic region also, full of the memories of famous deeds and celebrated men; and, if we seek the early evidences of our civilisation, we find them upon the hill, for the great Ermyng Street of the Romans, coming from London, traverses Cherkley Park, drops into the valley below the steepes of Box Hill, and climbs on its way south-westward.

From Cherkley, as from Norbury Park and from Mickleham Downs, there is a magnificent outlook, with the height of Box Hill near at hand and the grand steep of Leith Hill further away. A dominant note of the country is found in the deep tone of its famous yews. Rarely can such foliage be met with, and some of the trees are of colossal size. The beeches lift their pillared bulk to enormous heights, and cast below a vast breadth of shade, and, contrasted with the sombre tints of the yews, are glorious indeed. These yews are scarcely surpassed in England. Norbury Park, on the left bank of the Mole, has a fine "Druid's Grove," including such hoary veterans as the Fallen Giant and the Horse and his Rider. Cherkley, on the other side, has magnificent groups also.

"A pillar'd shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of red-
brown hue,
By sheddings from the pinage, um-
brage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose,
deck'd
With unrejoicing berries, ghastly
shapes
May meet at noontide—Fear and
trembling Hope,
Silence and Foresight, Death the
skeleton,
And Time the shadow."



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THE VICTORIA REGIA HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright

SOUTH VIEW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Something of mystic glamour is in the weathered, time-worn yew; but in the Mickleham Valley we issue from the groves to find the earth rejoicing and the sun touching the meadow and glistening on the leaves.

With such impressions of its surroundings then do we climb the hill to Cherkley Court. For Mr. Dixon's mansion is on the summit of the hill, facing the south-west, overlooking the Mickleham Valley, and with a grand foreground of garden and park and the sylvan heights of Norbury full in the prospect. The house itself is modern, attractive and imposing, as all may see from our pictures, but claiming no special note here.

Unfortunately in 1893 a disastrous fire greatly damaged the place, but it was quickly restored as the favourite residence of its owner. From the terrace the ground slopes rapidly, and the lawn sweeps down to the arboretum, lovely with its varied shades of green and the gold and silver sheen of its many handsome conifers. Then it drops to the wooded valley, beyond which the yew country rises. Anything more beautiful we could not ask for, and the lover of trees will find his heart's content in the splendour of that landscape. If the prospect is beautiful by day, it has a witchery of its own when the moon hangs above the hill and silvers the arboretum on the slope. Here is an interesting



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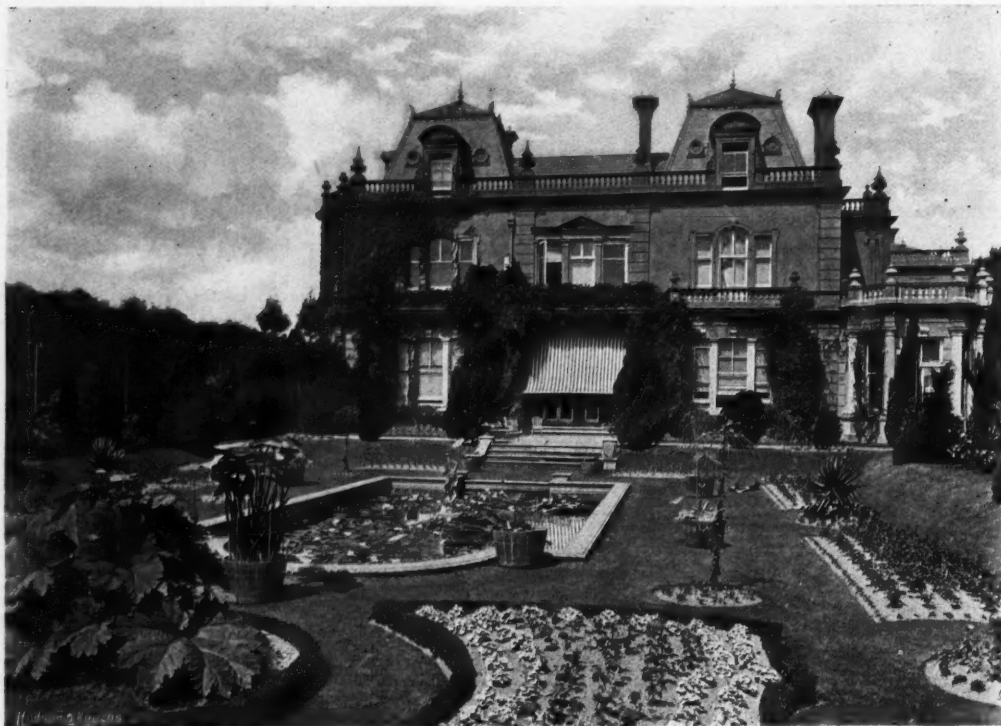
WATER-LILIES AT THEIR BEST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

place indeed, though many arboretums are larger. The ground is shallow, with a chalk subsoil, not suitable for all things, though many are coaxed to display their fullest charm. A hedge of *laurustinus*, *Garrya elliptica*, sea buckthorn, Atlas cedar, *Cupressus Lawsoniana*, the Japanese maple as a contrast, and *Abies Pinsapo* are some of the things worthy of mention. In this part of the garden bulbs are extensively planted, and the flowers seen in the grass under trees and shrubs are very effective. Violets are everywhere, or seem to be, and scent the air with their perfume; but, indeed, flowers are abundant in many places at Cherkley Court. Then, leaving the arboretum, we traverse a broad path of considerable length, and beautiful with its fine specimens of *Abies Pinsapo* and *Cupressus Lawsoniana*, which alternate and form a perfect avenue.

On the south-east side of the house, and well sheltered, is the Italian garden, and in the centre of the sunk lawn a large tank is charming with its growth of the best hardy water-lilies (*Nymphæas*), with many beautiful hybrids.

Another feature of great interest is found in the glass-houses, which cover an acre of ground, and are filled with plants of great interest. Behind the great conservatory is a house containing a number of camellias and the large white and red forms of *lapageria*; and beyond the camellia section are large plants of the guava (*Psidium Cattleianum*), which fruits regularly, and other tropical growths. A very fine feature is the great winter garden or tropical house, divided from the conservatory by large glazed doors, and containing a circular central basin, which holds



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THE ITALIAN GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the big foliage of the *Victoria Regia*. There are not many specimens of this famous water-lily in English gardens, because it requires so much space. One is at Chatsworth, and another in the Royal Gardens, Kew. The leaves of the *Victoria Regia* at Cherkley Court have measured as much as 7ft. or 8ft. across, with rims upturned to a height of 9in. The tropical house and conservatory are lighted by electricity, the lights being of various sizes and colours, and when the dividing doors are wide open a splendid view is obtained from the dining-room, which opens into the conservatory. The delights of the Alhambra have been brought to Cherkley Court, and how beautiful are the effects



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THE CONSERVATORY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

our pictures will enable the reader to conceive.

Varied, indeed, are the charms of the place. A glorious country, unsurpassed woodland, a radiant and attractive garden, houses filled with the delights of other lands, a sundial, splendid urns, and fine terracing, such as we know in many places in our own—these speak of attractions which our pictures disclose more plainly.

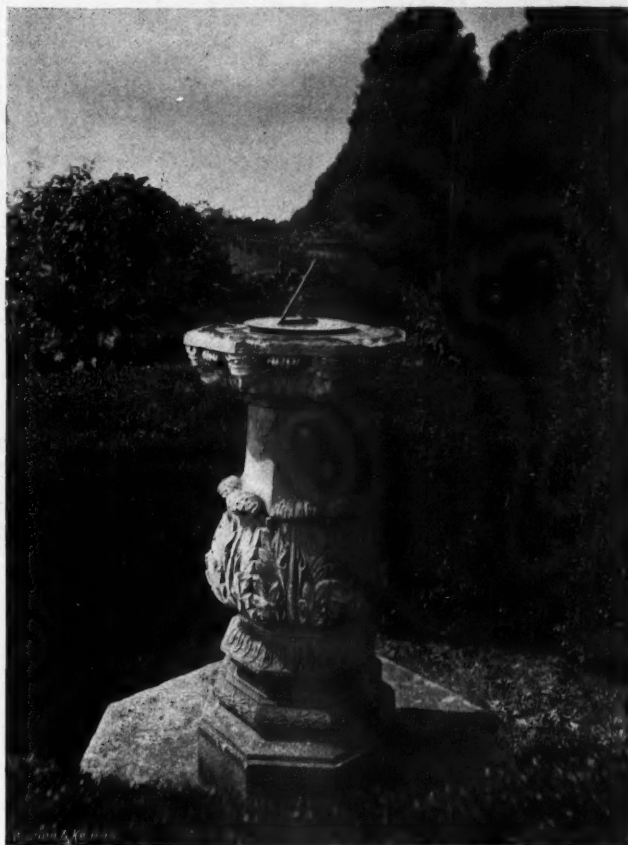
A Book of the Day.

IT is "The Farringdons," and the author of it is Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler, and Messrs. Hutchinson have the honour to be her publishers. It is a great one, for, as has been indicated already in a genuinely enthusiastic foreword, this is that most precious of finds in these days—a book which has not only permanent value, but a great deal of it. One hesitates almost to say it, but it is hard to resist the honest conviction that Miss Fowler is to be ranked among the few, the very few, who possess that indefinable thing called genius. Above all, she has individuality. She is no imitator. This book of hers is not in the least like any other book by anybody else. It is her own creation. Nobody can ever say of it, as an unkind but not entirely accurate critic has been saying of Stevenson, that it is an imitation of genius. It is the real thing.

The very cover of the book, with its Staffordshire knot in gilt, appeals to me. I passed some of my earliest and most impressionable years in Staffordshire, and for that reason, perhaps, the Willows seems to me the most natural house in the world. Then Miss Fowler introduces her scene and her characters plainly and lucidly. Osierfield is "the Works" on which the whole community depends. The Willows is the house in which reside Miss Maria and Miss Anne Farringdon, daughters of John Farringdon, who, with his brother William, had owned Osierfield. William's son George had been designed to marry Maria, but preferred disinheritance and Australia. John had died, and William also, and Maria, the very embodiment of Methodism, and Anne, her gentle sister—why are Annes always gentle?—remained at the Willows, owners of the Works, and with Richard Smallwood for manager. They had adopted Elizabeth, the orphaned child of a second cousin, and Christopher Townley was the nephew of Smallwood. These are all, or nearly all, the characters vital to the action, and at the time of the opening of the story both of the Miss Farringdons were "getting on," Christopher was a boy at the Grammar School, whose most striking characteristic was downright honesty and conscientiousness, and Elizabeth was a very natural girl child, living in an atmosphere of daydreams and make-believe, and in the conventional rich Methodist house. All this is portrayed with amazing fidelity and humour. First we have Elizabeth longing to be loved, yearning to be pretty, full of courage. Then we have her elderly cousins, both loving her dearly, but Cousin Maria would not have betrayed her love for worlds. This, for example, is a lovely and graphic dialogue:

"Oh! Cousin Maria, I do wish I was pretty!" "That is a vain wish, my child. Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain; and the Lord looketh on the heart and not on the outward appearance." And then Miss Maria goes on: "If you serve God and do your duty to your neighbour, you will find plenty of people ready to love you; and especially if you carry yourself well and never stoop."

As Miss Fowler



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THE TERRACE SUNDIAL.

"C.L."

her parlour and in its mural decorations, which consisted principally of a large and varied assortment of funeral cards, neatly framed and glazed." Could any description be neater? One can see the family photographs, "Mrs. Bateson's parents sitting side by side in two straight-backed chairs with their whole family twining round them—a sort of Swiss Family Laocoon," a splendid phrase, and the portrait of "Mr. Bateson in the attitude of Juliet and in the attire of a local preacher," and the picture of Wesley's death, and all the rest of it. The page seems to sparkle with wit and observation. As for cheerful Mrs. Bateson and her opposite Mrs. Hankey, to whom "a Sunday evening's discourse on future punishment and the like, with illustrations, was an unfailing source of pure and healthful pleasure," who anticipates the early death of both children, who does not know Mrs. Bateson's equal for making pastry or for engaging in prayer, they will live for ever. Their sayings will become familiar household words, as those of Mrs. Poyser and of Mrs. Tulliver and those of Mr. Weller did.

But the worst of this book is that it is continually forcing the reviewer into digressions against his will; and to progress becomes more difficult and more imperative with every line that is written. So let the action rush swiftly. Gentle Cousin Anne dies. Elizabeth, heart-broken, is sent to school, and returns, with restored spirits, to find Christopher qualifying for the post of manager after his uncle, and to find Alan Tremaine installed in a neighbouring house. The portrait of Alan is a keen, a cruel, and a perfect piece of workmanship. "He was a small, slight man, interesting-looking; rather than regularly handsome, of about five-and-twenty, who had devoted himself to the cultivation of his intellect and the suppression of his soul. Because his mother had been a religious woman he reasoned that faith was merely an amiable, feminine weakness; and because he himself was clever enough to make



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THE ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

passable Latin verses he argued that no supernatural being could have been clever enough to make him." Is not that splendid? And concerning Alan, Christopher and Elizabeth have their first real quarrel. But it is before this burst out that, in the course of a conversation, admirably told, occurs another beautifully clever passage, which is really the keynote of the book. "I really am tremendously quick in judging character," repeated Elizabeth, thoughtfully. "If I met you for the first time I should know in five minutes that you were a man with plenty of head, and heaps of soul, and very little heart." And Christopher turns white and cold, for the irony of the situation, the agony of it for him, consists in the fact that, on the one cardinal point of his nature—the one vital matter—Elizabeth is quite blind. Even after she has drawn a map of his feelings, and he has made her write Elizabeth across the whole of it, she does not see that the honest fellow is bursting with love, which he dare not tell, since he cannot support her.

Then Elizabeth takes a passing fancy for Alan Tremaine, they are thrown much together, but eventually her own goodness of nature and the influence of her friend Felicia Herbert combine to save her from the crowning folly of marrying him; and then, after some very interesting chapters with living persons in them, which space will not permit to be mentioned here, comes the turning point. Cousin Maria dies; her will, which, in Mrs. Bateson's opinion, does not give "any claim to a crape mantle with a bugle fringe," leaves Christopher her trustee, with a direction that everything shall go to Elizabeth unless any son of George Farringdon, the original disinherited one, can be found. Christopher thinks he ought to go, and the conversation which follows is so fine at every point that I venture to give a really long extract from it as being far preferable to any words of mine. It brings out with strong and almost terrible emphasis the contrast between the two great characters in the book.

"I don't want to go, Betty; I hate the mere idea of going. I'd give a thousand pounds if I could to stop away. But I can't see that I have any alternative. Miss Farringdon left it to me, as her trustee, to find her heir and give up the property to him; and, as a man of honour, I don't see how I can leave any stone unturned until I have fulfilled the charge which she laid upon me."

"Oh! Chris, don't go. I can't spare you." And Elizabeth stretched out two pleading hands towards him.

Christopher turned away from her. "I say, Betty, please don't cry," and his voice shook; "it makes it so much harder for me; and it is hard enough as it is—confoundedly hard!"

"Then why do it?"

"Because I must."

"I don't see that; it is pure Quixotism."

"I wish to goodness I could think that; but I can't. It appears to me a question about which there could not be two opinions."

The tears dried on Elizabeth's lashes. The old feeling of being at war with Christopher, which had laid dormant for so long, now woke up again in her heart, and inclined her to defy rather than to plead. If he cared for duty more than for her, he did not care for her much, she said to herself; and she was far too proud a woman ever to care for a man—even in the way of friendship—who obviously did not care for her. Still, she condescended to further argument. "If you really liked me and were my friend," she said, "not only wouldn't you wish to go away and leave me, but you would want me to have the money, instead of rushing all over the world in order to give it to some tiresome young man you'd never heard of six months ago."

"Don't you understand that it is just because I like you and am your friend that I can't bear you to profit by anything which has a shade of dishonour connected with it. If I cared for you less I should be less particular."

"That's nonsense! But your conscience and your sense of honour always were bugbears, Christopher, and always will be. They bored me as a child, and they bore me now."

Christopher winced; the nightmare of his life had been the terror of boring Elizabeth, for he was wise enough to know that a woman may love a man with whom she is angry, but never one by whom she is bored.

"It is just like you," Elizabeth continued, tossing her head, "to be so busy saving your own soul, and laying up for yourself a nice little nest-egg in heaven, that you haven't time to consider other people and their interests and feelings."

"I think you do me an injustice," replied Christopher, quietly. He was puzzled to find Elizabeth so bitter against him on a mere question of money, as she was usually a most unworldly young person; again, he did not understand that she was not really fighting over the matter at issue, but over the fact that he had put something before his friendship for her. Once she had quarrelled with him because he thought more of his duty than of her; for the truth that he could not have loved her so much had he not loved honour more had not as yet been revealed to Elizabeth.

"I don't want to be money grubbing," she went on, "or to cling on to things to which I have no right; though, of course, it will be rather poor fun for me to have to give up all this," and she waved her hand in a sweep, supposed to include the Willows and the Osierfield and all that appertained thereto, "and

to drudge along at the rate of five hundred a year, with yesterday's dinner and last year's dress warmed up again to feed and clothe me. But I ask you to consider whether the workpeople at the Osierfield aren't happier under my régime than under the rule of some good-for-nothing young man, who will probably spend all his income upon himself, and go to the dogs as his father did before him."

Christopher was cut to the quick; Elizabeth had hit the nail on the head. After all, it was not his own interests that he felt bound to sacrifice to the claims of honour, but hers; and it was this consideration that made him feel the sacrifice almost beyond his power. He knew that it was his duty to do everything he could to fulfil the conditions of Miss Farringdon's will; he also knew that he was compelled to do this at Elizabeth's expense and not at his own; and the two-fold knowledge well-nigh broke his heart. His misery was augmented by his perception of how completely Elizabeth misunderstood him, and of how little of the truth all those years of silent devotion had conveyed to her mind; and his face was white with pain as he answered:

"There is no need for you to say such things as that to me, Elizabeth; you know as well as I do that I would give my life to save you from sorrow and to ensure your happiness; but I cannot be guilty of a shabby trick even for this. Can't you see that the very fact that I care for you so much makes it all the more impossible for me to do anything shady in your name?"

"Bosh!" rudely exclaimed Elizabeth.

"As for the workpeople," he went on, ignoring her interruption, "of course no one will ever do as much for them as you are doing. But that isn't the question. The fact that one man would make a better use of money than another wouldn't justify me in robbing Peter to increase Paul's munificence. Now would it?"

"That's perfectly different. It is all right for you to go on advertising for that Farringdon man in agony columns, and I should be so silly as to make a fuss about giving up the money if he appeared, you know that well enough. But it does seem to me to be over-conscientious and hyper-disagreeable on your part to go off to Australia—just when I am so lonely and want you so much—in search of the man who is to turn me out of my kingdom and reign in my stead. I can't think how you can want to do such a thing!"

Elizabeth was fighting desperately hard; the full power of her strong will was bent upon making Christopher do what she wished and stay with her in England; not only because she needed him, but because she felt that this was a Hastings or Waterloo between them, and that if she lost this battle her ancient supremacy was gone for ever.

"I don't want to go and do it, Heaven knows! I hate and loathe doing anything which you don't wish me to do. But there is no question of wanting in the matter as far as I can see. It is a simple question between right and wrong—between honour and dishonour—and so I really have no alternative."

"Then you have made up your mind to go out to Australia and turn up every stone in order to find this George Farringdon's son?"

"I don't see how I can help it."

"And you don't care what becomes of me?"

"More than I care for anything else in the world, Elizabeth. Need you ask?"

For one wild moment Christopher felt that he must tell Elizabeth how passionately he would woo her should she lose her fortune; and how he would spend his life and his income

in trying to make her happy should George Farringdon's son be found and she cease to be one of the greatest heiresses in the Midlands. But he held himself back by the bitter knowledge of how cruelly appearances were against him. He had made up his mind to do the right thing at all costs; at least, he had not exactly made up his mind—he saw the straight path, and the possibility of taking any other never occurred to him. But if he succeeded in this hateful and (to a man of his type) inevitable quest, he would not only sacrifice Elizabeth's interests, he would also further his own by making it possible for him to ask her to marry him, a thing which he felt he could never do as long as she was one of the wealthiest women in Mershire and he was only the manager of her works. Duty is never so difficult to certain men as when it wears the garb and carries with it the rewards of self-interest; others, on the contrary, find that a joint-stock company, composed of the right and the profitable, supplies its passengers with a most satisfactory permanent way whereby to travel through life. There is no doubt that these latter have by far the more comfortable journey; but whether they are equally contented when they have reached that journey's end, none of them have as yet returned to tell us.

"If somebody must go to Australia after that tiresome young man, why need it be you?" Elizabeth persisted. "Can't you send somebody else in your place?"

"I am afraid I couldn't trust anybody else to sift the matter as thoroughly as I should; I really must go, Betty. Please don't make it too hard for me."

"Do you mean you will still go, even though I beg you not?"

"I am afraid I must."

Elizabeth rose from her seat, and drew herself up to her full height, as



Alice Hughes,

52, Gower Street.

MISS ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER.

became a dethroned and offended queen. "Then that is the end of the matter as far as I am concerned, and it is a waste of time to discuss it further; but I must confess that there is nothing in the world I hate so much as a prig," she said, as she swept out of the room.

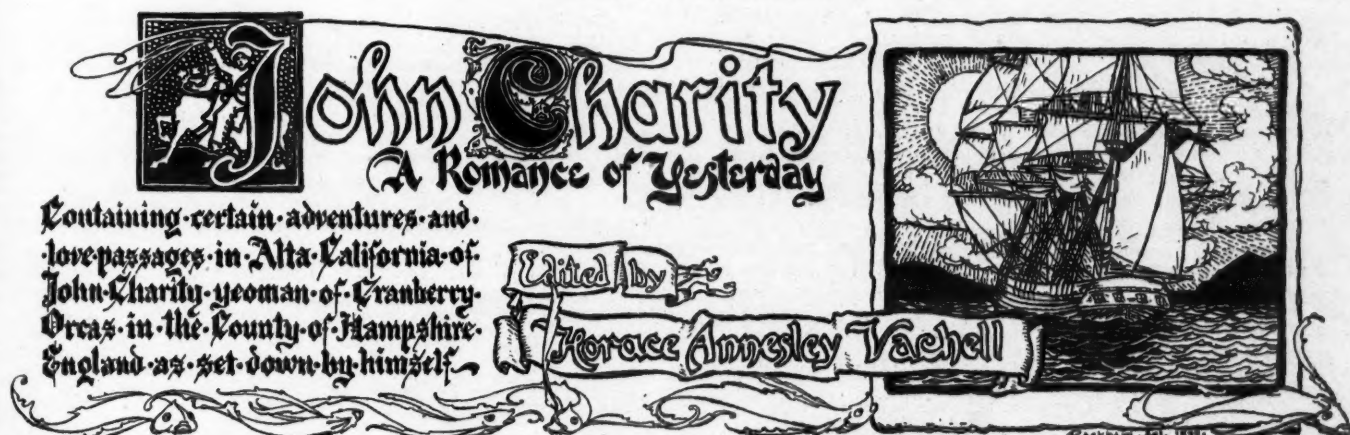
It was her final shot, and it told. She could hardly have selected one more admirably calculated to wound, and it went straight through Christopher's heart. It was now obvious that she did not love him, and never could have loved him, he assured himself, or she would not have misjudged him so cruelly, or said such hard things to him. He did not realise that an angry woman says not what she thinks will most hurt the man with whom she is angry. He also did not realise—what man does?—how difficult it is for any woman to believe that a man can care for her and disagree with her at the same time, even though the disagreement be upon a purely impersonal question. Naturally, when the question happens to be personal, the strain on feminine faith is still greater—in the majority of cases too great to be borne.

Thus Christopher and Elizabeth came to the parting of the ways. She said to herself, "He doesn't love me because he won't do what I want, regardless of his own ideas of duty." And he said to himself, "If I fail to do what I consider is my duty, I am unworthy—or, rather, more unworthy than I am in any case—to love her."

Thus they moved along parallel lines, and parallel lines never meet except at infinity.

Again I must pass by a whole series of vital events, Elizabeth's life in London, her acquaintance with Cecil Farquhar, painter of "The Daughter of

Philip," her triumph, his wooing of her, the reformation of Tremaine and his marriage to Felicia, the return of Christopher and the cold welcome he gets from Elizabeth, the proposal of Farquhar to Elizabeth, her doubts, her discovery that he has been false to poor little struggling Quenelda Caron, Farquhar's suggestion, made to Elizabeth after she has discovered his treachery, to Quenelda, that he is the lost heir. All these things and more are told with the pen of a consummate artist. But if Miss Fowler in London is good, and indeed excellent, Miss Fowler in Staffordshire is simply perfection. And it is in Staffordshire that the intensely dramatic end comes. It is there that Elizabeth, going to Christopher's house during his terrible illness, finds out that Christopher is really the lost heir. It was there that she learned the truth of Christopher's love for her at last, and that by her love she produced in him that desire to live which turned an absolutely hopeless case into a recovery. It was there that Christopher learned from Mrs. Bateson that "It's wonderful what a difference the asking makes." It was there that Mrs. Hankey said, "And if he don't have no objection to cleverness and a pale complexion, who shall gainsay him? If he's content, surely it aint nobody's business to interfere; even though we may, none of us, Miss Elizabeth included, be as young as we was ten years ago." There, too, did Mrs. Hankey say that white satin was a bit young and trying for "them as haven't much colour." "Still, white's the proper thing for a bride, and I always say 'do what's right and proper and never mind looks.'" Indeed, the last pages are simply redolent of humour, and it is a thousand pities that there is not room for them all. And so I lay down a book in which comedy and tragedy and tears and laughter are intermingled by the hand of a true artist.



CHAPTER XVII.

FOR LOVE I BECOME NOT A PAPIST, BUT A JEW.

THE cannibals' reason for the eating of missionaries—because they are so good—does not adequately account for woman's appetite for the company of priests. Padre José Lorenzo Quijas, for instance, was not good (not even from a cannibal's point of view, being tough as the *hondo* of a *reata*), yet he was the pet confessor of half the dames in Monterey. He had, however, a tender sympathy for sinners, pretty ones in particular, and with him, as with the fair penitents, precept ever outstripped performance.

Knowing his influence with Tia Maria Luisa, knowing also that the stout dame had warmed to me, I hurried to the friar after my interview with the Don, and gave him the marrow of the matter in half-a-dozen sentences, thereby glutting his humour.

"Tut, tut!" he chuckled, tapping my cheek with his broad forefinger. "Is thine a holiday title to the name of lover? Kites, my son, rise against the wind. A maid's caprice may be the zephyr that blows a heretic to Heaven. Now, thou must join the church. Then I'll tackle the man, and the maid, and the widow, and marry thee myself within the month. What? Oh, thou mule! Well, thou must burn here and hereafter. And speaking of burning, my mouth is a fiery furnace this morning. Let us find the pious Jaynes and crack a bottle."

"You won't help me?"

"My son, ask not too much of a Zacatecan. See now, I cannot help thee, but I will not hurt thee; and thou shalt have my prayers."

Whereat I laughed and left him to his prayers—and his bottle.

Alvarado cocked an anxious eye when I reported the result of my interview with Estrada.

"The old fox must be sure of his grapes," he murmured. Then I told him that thanks to my Yaqui's vigilance I had probably escaped a thrust of the puñal. He frowned heavily and bade me run no risks.

Of course I could think of nothing but Magdalena. And one must live in a Spanish country to understand how thoroughly my dear was encompassed with bristling abattis. She was not permitted to stir from the Casa Estrada unescorted; and at the wedding—a function she was bound to attend—she was hemmed in by her father and his black-a-vised friends.

Soto, in a gorgeous new suit, waited on her, and Dame Gossip's tongue wagged faster than a terrier's tail. The fellow, I must confess, could ride like a centaur, and performed a most extraordinary feat. I saw him take a silver salver laden with glasses filled to the brim with champagne; then he spurred his

horse to a full gallop, pulled the beast on to its haunches before it had gone fifty yards, and served the wine to us. Not a drop had been spilled!

From all parts of the country came the queer ox-drawn carts, rumbling along upon their huge solid wheels. The women sat inside—those at least who could not ride—and in front rode the men, a glittering cavalcade, a-sparkle with silk, velvet, and embroidery, singing, for the most part, the songs of the country. Here is one:

*"Palomita, vete al Campo,
Y dile a los tiradores
Que no te tiren, porq'eres
La duena de mis amores."*

This touched me to the core. Would these hunters slay my own little dove, who held my love in her tender breast? They had failed as yet to kill me; but Quijas, when he was sober and in serious mood, assured me that a father would not scruple to severely punish a disobedient child.

Not till the day of the bull and bear fight did I get word to her. It happened on this wise: The crowd would have been less cheery lacking the Jew, Solomon. I saw him each day displaying his wares upon the plaza, cajoling his customers, ogling the girls, and, need it be added, coining money. He came to me at my lodging and asked eagerly how I fared, but I was busy at the time and begged him to call again. After that he was busy, so nothing but nods passed between us. At the bull ring I marked him perched upon a corner of the high fence, and pointed him out to Letty, telling her of the famous trade he drove and predicting for him a golden future. I added that after the day's work in the plaza he would shoulder his pack and tramp from house to house, skimming the evening's cream at each. Letty pricked up her sharp little ears. "Let him play the postman," she said, "between Magdalena and you." I was amazed that so simple a reading of the riddle had eluded a fond and scheming lover. Certainly, I would write that same day. But, on second thoughts, a better plan tickled my fancy. Why should I not masquerade in the gloaming as Solomon? We were something of a size. With his peculiar clothes, his pack, some false hair, and a pot of rouge I would wager that the change could be made. As soon as the fight was over (a sorry combat, for the bear was tied by one leg to a stake, and the bull was too tame), I sought Solomon, and told him to be at my lodging without fail at seven. He made a grimace, but I jingled some loose silver, and he winked approval and assent.

But when, after supper, I unfolded my plan, the Jew raised his hands and voice in terrified protest. He was plainly scared out

of his wits, and promised me that Estrada would spit him like a pullet if the fraud were detected. Finally cash-box arguments prevailed, and we exchanged clothes. I added to my nose size and colour, stuffed my waistcoat with a pillow, trailed a brace of wiry curls behind my ears, and gave my eyebrows an upward tilt. When I spoke to Solomon in his own voice and peculiar accent, the wrinkles fled from his forehead. He pronounced the metamorphosis nearly perfect—in the twilight.

Then I shouldered his heavy pack and sallied forth. The street was empty, for the town was making merry near the plaza, but as I turned the corner past Alvarado's house who should rudely jostle the humble Jew but the Señor Cosmé Servin, a bully, and, as events proved, a coward. Poor Solomon was patient as an ass beneath the insults and injuries of the Californians, entering them, doubtless, with other debts in his ledger; but I was minded to astonish the mestizo, so I fetched him with my left fist a buffet that laid him flat in the dust. He jumped up quickly, puñal in hand, but with Solomon's cudgel I cracked the bone of his wrist so sharply that he dropped his knife and scuttled away howling. I grinned and stepped briskly on. Close to the barracks some booths had been put up, and in a willow enclosure a fandango was in full swing. Passing the gate, I saw that mad priest Quijas, who had laid aside his Zacatecan habit, and now was footing it with a pretty Indita. He had arrayed himself in the *cúera de gamuza* of a soldier, and looked a swashbuckler of the church militant. As ill-luck would have it, he espied me, and yelling out, "Halt! Jew," dropped his pretty armful, and gave chase, for I scurried away like a rabbit at sound of his stentor tones. I stopped, however, out of earshot of the crowd, and was condemned by the friar to eternal punishment for the pace I had set.

"A rebozo," he panted, pinching my arm. "Quick—undo thy pack."

I began to unstrap it, mumbling apologies. It was dark, and the good priest was more than mellow, but delay and a crowd were likely to undo me.

"Father," I muttered in Spanish, "keep off the buzzards and I will give thee my wares at cost, nay, I'll make thee a present of a rebozo, for truly trouble awaits me if I be not at the house of Estrada upon the stroke of eight."

The friar eyed me sharply; then he laughed, and growled in his beard that the Jew's voice was thickened with aguardiente. As I pushed the rebozo across the pack, he caught my hand in his and gripped his thanks for the present. He was a powerful man and gripped hard; unconsciously I gripped back. "Dios!" he exclaimed. "Thou hast a Christian's grip, Solomon. I like thee the better for it. Go in peace."

"Father," I mumbled, "I have given thee the rebozo for nothing save a squeezed hand. May your Indita prove more grateful."

"Thou impudent knave!" he said, hurriedly. "See now, I frolic with the crowd; they like it, but I do not soil my cloth. None of the *gente de razon*" (the quality) "is here. Not a word, Solomon, thou wise Jew, to the ladies at Estrada's. Be gone!"

I was right glad to be released, for some half-breeds were hovering round us, not daring to approach the sacred person of the priest, yet curious as to the nature of his business with a Jew. You may be sure I started hot-foot up the hill, and I heard Quijas bidding the others not to follow me.

Now the Jew had told me that Tia Maria Luisa had ordered of him some linen kerchiefs, plain goods to be fashioned into filmy laces by the cunning hands of the serving-women, and these lay snug at the bottom of the pack against some fine white silk stockings—my lure for Magdalena. Above them were the tawdry trifles so dear to the heart of Inditas. Like a canny housewife, I proposed to scatter my common grain for the chickens to peck at, whilst my tit-bits would challenge the attention of that fatted hen, Tia Maria Luisa. On arrival at the house I was surrounded at once by the chattering crowd of domestics, and presently Tia Maria waddled forth and drew me aside. I gave her the linen, which she examined with a falcon's eye, and then, in a humble voice, I craved permission to show a pair of stockings to the señorita. I had promised them to her, I said, and of course she would wish to see them. Tia Maria grunted, and a girl was sent a-running for my dear. How my heart ached, as she walked towards me, so thin, so pale, so tired. But her voice was warm and kind when she greeted the poor Jew, and she begged me to enter the sala where she could inspect my wares in peace and silence. This piece of luck I had scarce hoped for, though Solomon had told me that such was her custom. Alas! as I crossed the threshold I spied the sour face of Don Narciso peering out of a cloud of tobacco smoke, and cheek by jowl with the Don sat Soto, leering at a glass of Madeira. Truly I was in the jackals' den. However, I passed them in safety, and my dear led the way to a table at the end of the room. As I bent over my pack I murmured: "'Tis I, Magdalena, your lover."

She started; and then her sweet face was suffused with the tenderest glow, and a sigh fluttered from her parted lips. I had stormed the citadel, surprised the garrison, and could dictate my

terms—unconditional surrender. Action stampeded the imps bred by inaction. I saw that I was forgiven.

As she bent, blushing, over my pack, I stole a kiss. Then, as I mumbled a pedlar's patter, I exhausted a lover's vocabulary in pleading my cause.

She began to bargain for the stockings, while her eyes showered sparks upon a heart sensitive as tinder.

"They are too dear," she said, loudly; whispering, "as thou art, *querido*."

"Pure silk," I retorted, in my execrable Jew's Spanish; "made for a goddess—whom I worship," I added, softly.

The game warmed us both, and the men at the other end of the room had their backs to us, and were completely engrossed with their cigars and wine.

"Why wert thou so cruel, Magdalena?"

"Answer me truly, Juan. Didst thou not once love thy beautiful cousin?"

And at that I made tardy confession, whereat she pouted, and confided in turn that she had been and still was jealous of Letty. The minutes flew, and we feared to arouse the suspicions of Don Narciso, so presently Magdalena said aloud, with mocking emphasis, "Art sure, Solomon, that thy goods will wear?"

"For a lifetime, señorita."

"Thou canst come again, Solomon. *Adios*, Lochinvar."

"At your service, señorita. *Adios*, Elena."

Then we glanced furtively round and our lips met. A slight grunt from the doorway tore us apart. There, on the threshold, palsied with amazement, stood Tia Maria Luisa. Not a moment was to be lost. I rose to my full height, lifted my false curls, and blew a kiss to the stout dame. Magdalena flew to her, chattering like a frightened finch. I rammed my wares into my pack, and shuffled past the men, past the women, and out into the patio. Tia Maria followed majestically, a battle-ship sailing into action.

"Wretch!" she growled. "How dare you, how dare you?"

"Señora, I kiss your lovely ear, that is—if I only could."

"You are utterly shameless. I must tell my brother."

"Then El Capitan will die a bachelor."

"Go, go, or I shall strike you. Take these."

She held the handkerchiefs in her hand. "Keep them," I whispered.

"Ay! You are a devil." Cupidity wrestled with duty and prevailed.

"*Adios*, señora."

She turned a broad back to me, as I slipped across the patio and mingled with the crowd. Five minutes later I was running, helter-skelter, down the slope, and within a quarter of an hour Solomon had his pack again and a small sackful of pesetas. He chuckled with delight when he learned of Cosmé Servin's misadventure, and groaned when I imitated Tia Maria Luisa's peculiar grunt and baleful stare.

"My cracious!" he exclaimed. "I dink I do no more peesness mit her."

"Cheer up. El Capitan will soon foot the bills at the Casa Estrada."

Solomon shook his greasy curls.

"El Capitan vill be fooled," he said, solemnly, "if he ogspect to touch der moneys of dot lady. He vill be fooled badly, by Chimini."

And in this Solomon, the Jew, proved a true prophet.

Now Magdalena's allusion to Lochinvar set me thinking. The Heron was about to clear for England, and I made no doubt that the mate, now skipper, a warm friend of mine, would gladly splice Magdalena and me, sailor fashion, upon the high seas. Then he could put us ashore at Santa Barbara. Later, Holy Church, who ever accepts the inevitable with grace and sagacity, would not refuse her rites to a daughter of the Estradas, and all Californians would agree that John Charity had proved himself a lover and a caballero.

Accordingly, I wrote a letter, first in Spanish, which I destroyed, for the Spanish tongue, albeit the language of love, does not readily lend itself to the plainer, more practical purposes of life. So I cut my quill to a blunter point and began again in English, which Magdalena could read fluently, though ever unwilling to talk it. I avoided, it will be noted, the use of names.

"My dearest" (I began), "would to God that you could read my heart as easily as this letter, for then I know that you would not fear to trust yourself to my keeping. I know what your life has been for many months, that he who should protect and love you has proved cruel, a tyrant, a gaoler. I know how lonely you are, how forlorn, and I know, also, that of late I have unconsciously given you offence, because I have been *forced*—I underscore the word—to console another woman, as forlorn as you, a woman, sweetheart, for whom I have no such love as I bear you, but whose beauty, as I told you, once stirred my heart, and whose present unhappiness stirs my sympathy and pity. The poor soul is racked by jealousy, and you will understand without further words the delicacy of my position. But now

your love claims me, as I claim you. And I ask you for both our sakes to brave the chatter of the gossips, the sneer of those unworthy to kiss your feet, and to give your life as you have given your love into my charge. I ask you to leave Monterey with me. And I have a plan. The skipper of the *Heron* is my friend. His gig lies beside the Custom House barge. Your quick wit will devise means to such an end as our mutual happiness. And once on blue water we can laugh at the world. The skipper will put us ashore at Santa Barbara. My darling, there is no other way than this. 'Tis an awful step for a woman to take. Only true love can excuse it. Come to me, sweetheart, come. I cannot live without you.

"To-morrow I shall look for a red rose in your hair, for that will mean assent to my plan. If it is not there, I shall know that—No, no, it will be there. I no more doubt your love for me than mine for you. *Hasta Luego*.

"Your devoted friend."

Now, the matter of composing this billet had been simple enough, but the manner of delivering it troubled me. While I was debating the how and the when of it, Courtenay came into my room and sat down.

"I am honoured," said I, for he seemed to prefer the company of Castañeda and Castro to mine, a fact that vexed and hurt me. Yet I confess that his *bonhomie* and charm were ever potent to melt resentment. Accordingly, we fell to talking, and I told him of my adventure, of my dear maid's surrender, and finally of the letter I had just sealed. I added that I was certain none but Quijas would know of what had passed between Magdalena and me, for the holy man would commend Tia Maria Luisa to silence. Had not the Jew caught the Gentile on the hip? For pranks that might not soil a habit carefully laid aside, would, if repeated to dames of quality, discolour a friar's reputation.



A HOME FOR SPARROWS.



NESTING-BOXES OF TITMOUSE AND NUTHATCH.

"I will get your billet delivered," said Courtenay, suddenly. "Give it to me, old John."

I let him have it—fool that I was—with a word of caution, nothing more. He would not tell me the name of his postman, but was laughingly positive that the letter would be duly delivered. Later, he informed me that a dame of his acquaintance had undertaken the task, and that it would surely be accomplished.

I must now pause to observe that I blame myself as much as Courtenay for a thoughtless and reckless piece of business. Knowing my foster-brother to be somewhat hare-brained, I was a fool to trust him with a paper so important. His gay importunity beguiled my judgment, as before it had beguiled it many a time when we were boys and undergraduates. What became of it must now be set forth, although I learned the exact facts many months after. It seems that Courtenay had been struck by the charms of a Montereyna, the wife of a big, yellow-faced, black-whiskered kinsman of Alvarado. And she returned his admiration with interest, being naturally flirtatious, and—as I shall shortly prove—none too scrupulous. Courtenay has since sworn that 'twas play on his part, but the dame doubtless thought otherwise. In fine, she was infatuated with the young man's splendid figure and handsome face. To this lady Courtenay delivered my letter. She was an intimate friend and kinswoman of Magdalena, and, being a Latin, accepted the commission without asking indiscreet questions. A man of sense would at least have made it plain that the letter was none of his, and had Courtenay frankly told her so, much terrible misery would have been avoided. When he took his leave the lady, believing that my foster-brother had written the billet himself, broke the seal, and not being able to interpret the English, knowing also that Magdalena could read it easily, her suspicions became certainty. In this mood she encountered de Castañeda, who lodged in the same house, and to him she made

confession and entreated a translation. Now Castañeda knew my handwriting and might have consoled the lady, but some hearts being as easily broken (and mended) as seals, and a knave ever having an immeasurable advantage over a fool, he deliberately assured her that the billet was indeed Courtenay's, and so inflamed her jealousy that she finally gave it to the Mexican. Indeed he demanded it, as the price of silence, telling the dame—I had this story from her own lips some years after—that he had a use for it.

And thus it came to pass that my own foster-brother, *mon frère du lait*, as the French have it, put into the hands of my enemy a deadly weapon.

(To be continued.)

Nests and Nesting-boxes.

IT may perhaps be interesting, when our feathered friends are busy building their nests, to give an account of how they may be attracted to make their homes near our smaller suburban dwelling-houses, and this is an end which may be easily attained by those who care to go to a very small amount of trouble to procure a result which will be found both interesting and gratifying. First of all I must premise that this article is only intended for those who live in or near to large towns, as the more fortunate of us, who live in the country, have ample opportunities of studying the ways and habits of our wild birds under absolutely natural conditions, and without the need of any artificial assistance in the shape of either food supply or nesting accommodation being provided for them. The two great necessities for our birds in the nesting season are a sufficiency of suitable food and proper accommodation in the way of sites for their nests. The birds which of all others are most easily attracted are tits of various kinds, and these perhaps, from the beauty of their plumage, their fearlessness, and vivacity, are more interesting than any other class. When the weather is cold and their natural food supply is scarce, they very soon find out when anything is provided for their benefit, and the kinds of food that are most appreciated are suet and a good-sized beef bone which has not been too cleanly picked.



TENANTS WANTED.

The suet should be enclosed in a knitted bag, made from fine string with the meshes not too large, so that the birds can perch on the bag and feed from it, but are not able to peck off large pieces, with which they would fly away to some secluded spot where they would be free from observation. If the food supply is kept up constantly, they will soon come to understand the fact, and there will always be a number of these charming birds to be found on or about the tree to which the food is suspended. The commonest, of course, are the great tit and the blue tit, but the Cole tit will probably also be a constant visitor, and the marsh tit, that daintiest of all, a not infrequent one; in fact, I often have all four kinds on a tree at the same time within 10ft. of my windows. These four represent all our commoner kinds of tits, with the exception of the long-tailed species, and this, being much more shy, does not appear to be very fond of approaching near to our dwelling-houses. Another bird, intensely interesting, which will probably appear if there are any large trees in the vicinity, is the nuthatch, and of these beautiful birds I have had a pair coming to feed every day during the winter on the same tree with the tits. This bird is a very handsome fellow with his reddish breast and strong build, very like a kingfisher in shape, but only seems to come in pairs, as I never have more than two at the same time, probably the same pair. It is very interesting to see him running down a tree, or a nesting-box, seeking for any morsel of food. He always seems to prefer to run down and not up.

Another kind of food which is much appreciated for a change is a cocoa-nut sawn in half, and I have sometimes taken part of the shell off a number of Brazil nuts and suspended them separately by about gin. of very fine string. The tits soon found that a Brazil nut was rather a small object to perch on and feed

from at the same time, and developed the idea that it would be easier to stand on the branch to which the string was tied and haul up the nut hand over hand, or rather claw over claw, until they succeeded in getting it on the branch when they would place one claw upon it and hold it thus, taking their fill until they had satisfied their hunger, or until some person passing too near would frighten them away, when the nut would be dropped for a time, the same process to be repeated shortly afterwards.

Perhaps enough has been said about food supply; we will now turn to the nesting-boxes. Practically almost any kind of box may be used, such as cigar-boxes or old cartridge-boxes, but the former are hardly strong enough to withstand the weather. The kind I use, and which seem very readily taken to, are made from stout deal board about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, and gin. cubic measurement inside. They are covered with pieces of virgin cork, which give them a more natural as well as a more sightly appearance. The lid is made detachable, so that the nesting operations may be viewed from time to time, tits being very fearless, so that if the lid is quietly lifted the bird seldom leaves the nest, but sits quietly looking at the intruder until again left in undisputed possession.

The entrance for the smaller tits should be about the diameter of a penny, but rather more oval in shape, the greatest width being from side to side. For the great tits and nuthatch it should be about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wider. It is necessary to be particular as to the size of the entrance holes, as if made too large the birds for which the boxes are provided will be evicted by sparrows. The birds under consideration will also be shy of adopting a nesting-place of which the orifice is too large, as they know their safety is ensured by having an entrance only just large enough for their own admission, although



NEST OF BLUE TIT WITH THIRTEEN EGGS.

nuthatches will themselves plaster up a hole that is too large until it suits their requirements. The hole should be made about two-thirds of the distance from the bottom of the box and towards one side, and a perch should be placed immediately underneath it to facilitate the entrance of the birds. The same boxes may be used for starlings, but a much larger hole may be made. For sparrows I make a kind of miniature dovecote, which may be seen by reference to the illustration. For jackdaws the box is required rather more than twice the size, about 2ft. long and 1ft. wide and high, and should have the entrance at the bottom, with a perching board on a level with the bottom of the box.

Another bird which takes most readily to any accommodation provided for it is the spotted flycatcher. This is a most beautiful and dainty little bird, very interesting to observe, as it seldom goes far from the nest, selecting a branch or fence in an open position, from which it makes its excursions in pursuit of the flies which form its diet, and returning many times to the same perch after its short flights in pursuit of food. This bird requires an open bracket, not a box, which should be placed in the angle of a wall and under overhanging masonry, such as the porch of a door or the top of a window. It is made about 2in. deep and placed about 6in. below the covering which protects it. Robins will take to any kind of nesting-place, such as a flower-pot, an old coffee-pot, or watering-can, placed in a secluded position;



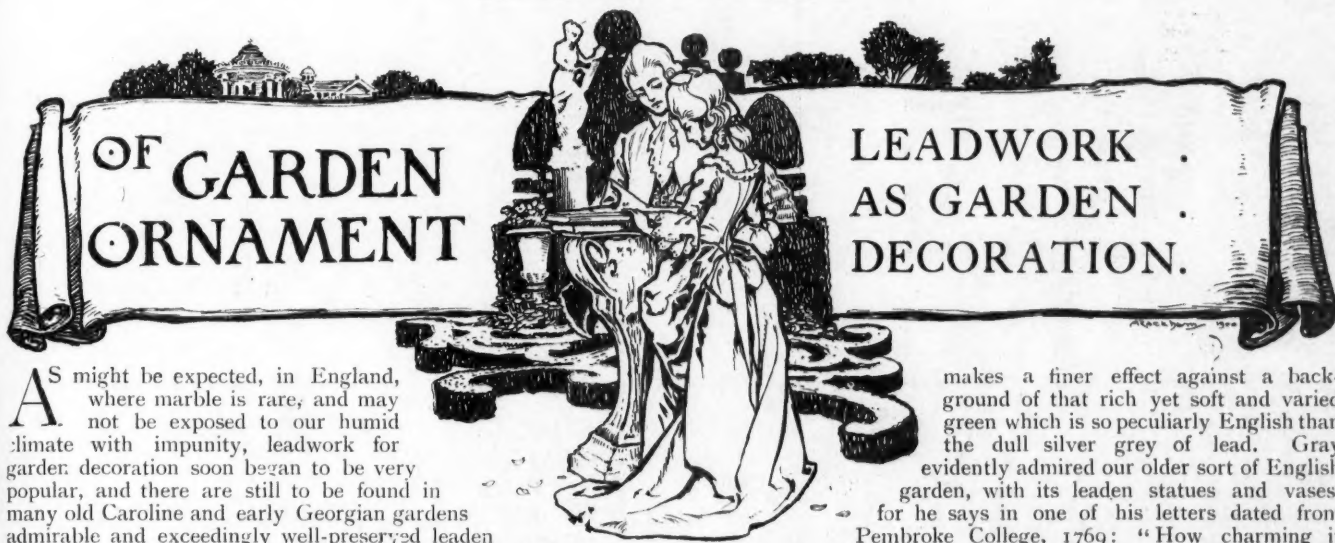
NEST OF GREAT TIT.

in fact, almost any nook or cranny will be appropriated by this delightful little bird. It is best at the beginning of each season to clear out any old nesting materials that may have been previously used, as nearly all birds prefer new nests, and will probably remove the old ones themselves if this is not done for them.

Most of the birds mentioned will return year after year to the same nesting-place if previously undisturbed. I have also tried to induce thrushes and blackbirds to adopt square open boxes placed in convenient shrubs, but have not been successful up to the present, these birds seeming to prefer to choose their own sites, many of which are available even in the smallest gardens.

Of course there are many other birds which may be induced to adopt artificial nesting-places, such as the redstart, owl, stock dove, etc., but as a rule these are too shy to be induced to take up their abode in the suburban garden to which our article alludes.

In conclusion, I should like to say that I am aware very many bird-lovers have already adopted the methods named, and I would endeavour to persuade those who have not done so to make the attempt, as I am quite sure that any little trouble it may involve will be amply repaid by the great amount of pleasure they will secure by having these charming little creatures near them throughout the whole year. B. W. RUSSELL.



AS might be expected, in England, where marble is rare, and may not be exposed to our humid climate with impunity, leadwork for garden decoration soon began to be very popular, and there are still to be found in many old Caroline and early Georgian gardens admirable and exceedingly well-preserved leaden casts of renowned statues. Unfortunately, most of these statues were coated with white or cream-coloured paint, and even bedaubed in all the colours of the rainbow. Not many years ago I was surprised to find in an old garden in Norfolk that some large vases which looked as if they were made of terra-cotta turned out, on being scraped with a knife, to be in reality lead. There is no necessity for concealing this material, since nothing

makes a finer effect against a background of that rich yet soft and varied green which is so peculiarly English than the dull silver grey of lead. Gray evidently admired our older sort of English garden, with its leaden statues and vases, for he says in one of his letters dated from Pembroke College, 1769: "How charming it must be to walk in one's own garden and sit on a bench in the open air with a fountain and a leaden statue, and a rolling stone and an arbour. Have a care, though, of sore throat and the ague" (*sic*). Throughout the last century leaden statues reigned supreme, not only in lordly gardens in the country, but in those of the metropolis, and to this day in the dilapidated gardens at the back of many old houses in Bloomsbury



FLORA AT DRAYTON HOUSE.



A SLAVE AT MELBOURNE.

there may be found leaden statues and vases and some extremely large tanks. In the house No. 12, Buckingham Street, Strand, is a very handsome leaden tank of the time of Queen Anne, bearing the initials "A. R.," and the date 1707.

The Dutch modeller Van Nost established himself towards the middle of the last century in St. Martin's Lane as a lead statuary in succession to Mr. Cheere, who had served his time for many years with his brother, Sir H. Cheere, in the same business. It seems that both predecessor and successor did a very important business, and cast in lead figures, as large as life, which, Heaven forgive them! "they frequently painted to resemble nature." Their stock included representations of Venus, Juno, Minerva, and the Apollo Belvedere, as well as Mr. Punch, Harlequin and Columbine, Moors, haymakers "resting on their rakes," gamekeepers, and Roman soldiers "with fire-locks." They seem, above all, to have done a specially brisk trade in the reproductions of a certain African slave, upholding a sundial on his head, a specimen of which is still to be seen in the Temple Gardens. This particular statue appears to have been brought from Italy late in the seventeenth century by Holles, Lord Clare. I think, however, it will be found to be a cast of a bronze by Petro Tacca, the sculptor of the famous group of galley slaves in the Piazza at Leghorn, identical with it in every way which I have seen in several Italian gardens, notably at Florence. It is quite evident that this African is an old stager, and a very admirable one, and it is a great pity some of our modern lead-workers do not reproduce him, for he is highly decorative, looks admirable in the Temple Gardens, and would doubtless appear even more picturesque amid the sylvan surroundings of a country garden. Very delightful, too, are the pretty groups of Cupids at Melbourne, which, judging from their style, are apparently of French workmanship of the eighteenth century.

In the present century the superabundance of these leaden statues has been greatly modified. At the beginning of this century whole regiments of leaden Venuses, Moors, Jupiters, angels, saints, nymphs, and fauns were converted into bullets. They were, indeed, threatened with total extermination, but, thanks to the prevailing taste for things ancient, some of them survived, and they have once more become fairly fashionable, and may the day be far distant when those which have resisted the hand of time and of vandalism will be dislodged from their charming havens of rest. There used to be an immense number of leaden statues at Chiswick, which was dismantled in 1892 by the Duke of Devonshire, but, with Lady

Macbeth, we may well ask, "Where are they now?" At beautiful Burton Agnes, in Yorkshire, there is a fine leaden Fighting Gladiator, and in the gardens of Studley Royal (Fountain's Abbey), Lord Ripon's seat in Yorkshire, in one of the lakes, rises above the level of the water a noble group of leaden nymphs and fauns. In the lovely old gardens at Melbourne, Derbyshire,

leaden figures abound, and they are of such great excellence, both in design and perfection of workmanship, as to be almost unique. In the formal gardens there are two heroic-sized figures of Perseus and Andromeda, a flying Mercury, copied from Giovanni da Bologna, two slaves carrying vases, and several Cupids, very busy with bow and arrow, and doing general mischief to lads and lasses. A tolerable group of Cain and Abel existed until recently in the great grass quad of Brasenose College, Oxford, but, although a very noble work, it appears to have been improved away. Glenham, in Suffolk, boasts of a quaint representation in lead of the Duke of Marlborough and of Prince Eugene, and at Temple Densley, near Hitchin, stands a delightful figure of Father Time with an hour-glass in his hand.

Lead lends itself to the reproduction of life-sized animals, such as horses, dogs, stags, and lions, which look exceedingly well when placed upon lofty pedestals, or else arranged in the centre of a lawn, or in the neighbourhood of lakes, fountains, or brooks, but care should be taken not to follow the fashion of our ancestors, who painted these animals in their natural colours, with a result which, as Mr. Pepys would have remarked, "was unseemly" and unworthy of anyone with the least developed taste. Far better is it to gild, silver, or bronze them, but they look their best unadorned by any meretricious aids to deception. Lead they are, and lead they should remain. A judicious use in gardens of leaden statuary, vases, tanks, and fountains is one highly to be recommended. The beautiful Italian vase at Drayton, of which we give an illustration, is one of the most graceful works

of its class extant. As to the industry of making these effigies, the revival of it is to be recommended as likely to become, once the fashion of using them attains popularity, exceedingly remunerative. Terra-cotta vases and statues do not withstand our climate, and they are very liable to be broken, whereas leaden figures which have been in existence some 200 or 300 years are as perfect to-day as when they were first placed in position. A selection of good models is all that is required for what, after all, is one of the cheapest forms of outdoor decoration. All eccentricities, however, should be avoided, such as little huntsmen, groups of shooters, and other trivialities, which only rouse a smile of exasperation and a longing for the right to melt them down. However, even some of these when they are genuinely antique have the merit of quaintness. I

remember, many, many years ago, seeing in a Norfolk garden a party of leaden figures in the costumes of the last century seated at a table, and evidently having what our American cousins would call a high old time, for before them were goblets and bottles, and one of the gentlemen had his gun leaning beside him. The ladies were dressed à la Watteau, and one fair dame had a spaniel on her lap. Although they were some thirty years ago in a very dilapidated condition and thickly coated with moss and lichen, they still retained here and there evidences of having been painted to represent life,



FROM WORDS TO BLOWS.



THE BONE OF CONTENTION.



A BATTLE ROYAL.

which must have rendered them simply frightful. As they were they had a haunted look, admirably in keeping with the great yew arbour in which they had sat in enchanted stillness for something like 150 years.

RICHARD DAVEY.

"WANTED A BAILIFF."

POLITICAL economy, that "blessed word," teaches us that where there is a demand there is always a supply to meet it. How then is it that the supply of competent men to undertake the situation of bailiff is so undoubtedly unequal to the demand which certainly exists for such servants? If anyone doubts this fact, let him try to find a bailiff for himself, and it may be safely predicted that before he brings his search to a successful conclusion he will, unless exceptionally fortunate, have come across some of the queerest possible specimens of "the man that failed." It is needless to say that the difficulties of the undertaking are increased, nay doubled, if the place to be filled is one which requires the services of a married couple. The man may be suitable in every way, his wife impossible; or, on the other hand, you may light on a busy, brisk, invaluable woman with a lazy, incapable husband; but you may consider yourself fortunate above measure if, even after much advertising and many fruitless interviews, you chance to meet with a couple who satisfy your requirements in every way.

It is difficult to say why this should be. Farming, we are told on all sides, is a declining industry. The amateur unfolds before our gaze his lugubrious balance-sheets, in which "deficit" looms large and threatening, despite ample capital and all that science can devise. The practical farmer shakes his head, and talks of bringing his eldest boy up to a trade.

One would think, then, that a position like that of bailiff, granted a reasonable master, would offer an attractive prospect to many sons of farmers who either lack means to set up for themselves, or, having a little capital, desire to increase it before venturing on the hazardous move of taking a farm of their own. A bailiff's place, provided always, as was said above, it be under a master who gives his servants reasonable and considerate treatment, ensures to the man who fills it a good salary and an interesting and responsible occupation; while it frees him for the most part from the anxiety of making ends meet, which presses so hardly on the farmer with small capital, and from the risk of seeing the little money he may have disappear in one season from a series of accidents, or from disease among his stock.

Independence, it is true, the farmer has, the bailiff has not. But in many cases, when once a man has proved himself worthy of confidence, a wise master will leave him largely to himself, and most probably give him full control over the men whom he employs. Certain it is that, however desirable such positions may seem to outsiders, they do not commend themselves to the class of men who are required to fill them. Large home farms attached to big estates and the luxurious establishments of the farming millionaire require managers who belong to a different class from that of the ordinary farmer. Such berths, of course, with the liberal salaries which attach to them, are probably easy enough to fill; it is the "working bailiff," to manage the modest home farm attached to some small property, or to act as temporary tenant of some holding which it is desired for some reason to keep in hand, whom it is so hard to find, and if the farm in question is a home farm, there must be also a wife or daughter who is equal to dairy and poultry management, a desideratum which considerably complicates the search.

It is true that you need only insert an advertisement in your local paper to receive by return of post, and by every subsequent delivery for a full week, a sheaf of applications, many of them from correspondents who, if taken at their own valuation, would seem to be the very people for the place, but, alas! on investigation the sanguine advertiser must expect many a sad disappointment. He knows very well the deceptive character of such letters, which are on a par with the perennial delusive advertisements of charming houses, which turn out to be mouldy unhealthy ruins. He knows this very well; yet in spite of all so

persistently does the human mind buoy itself up with hopes, he allows himself to imagine that this time he will find an exception. Surely this excellent-sounding couple: Husband aged forty, active, energetic, farmer's son; wife good dairy and poultry; with testimonials from two neighbouring auctioneers enclosed, and the names of other gentlemen as references into the bargain—surely this couple are worth looking after. Well does the writer remember his own experience in a similar case. The applicant in question wrote from a fairly accessible address, and it seemed advisable to go and inspect him in his own home before going the length of having him over to see the place and writing to his references. A letter was written fixing a time, and in due course the train deposited the advertiser at a country station about a mile from "Mr. Brown's" house. At the very first sight of the still distant chimneys misgivings began to rise. It proved to be a tawdry half-cottage, half-villa, with a newly-laid-out untidy, dusty garden, and the sight of Mr. B., who opened the door in person, was quite enough to settle the question of his fitness for the place he sought—an undersized shuffling little mortal, in a suit of shabby tweeds, who looked as if he had spent all his life at a tailor's bench rather than in the open air and beneath the canopy of heaven. His wife, by the way, was even less suited to the part, a blowsy, overdressed, unhealthy-looking woman, whose proper place, if anywhere,

was, to be charitable, behind the counter of an old clothes shop in Praed Street. It would be curious to know the history of such a strange couple. This, though true, is, as may be supposed, an extreme case of the unsuitability of applicants for the place they seek; but this same quest for a bailiff which led to the interview with Mr. and Mrs. Brown brought the advertiser into contact with other individuals whose unfitness for the work they sought was so extreme as to be quite comic. One man, it was arranged, was to be interviewed at a railway station on the way to an appointment with another and more likely candidate. Accordingly, on the departure of the throng of passengers, the platform was scanned with a view to discerning the would-be bailiff. No one was in sight who could by any possibility be the man in question. In the refreshment-room a rakish-looking, pasty-faced person, with a brown "billycock" hat very much on one side, was engaging in conversation with the young lady at the bar over a whisky and water. A dingy tie, which had once been of rather startling pattern and was adorned with a pin in imitation of a fox's brush, combined with ill-fitting box-clutch gaiters, gave a horsey character to his "get up," and it was only the lapse of many minutes and the absence of any other stranger on the premises that bore in upon the mind the alarming conviction that here was the farmer *in posse*!

It may be objected that a judicious use of references would prevent one from interviewing such grossly unsuitable applicants; but five minutes' conversation with, and a good look at, a man, even if it entails a journey, is often less trouble and always more decisive than letter writing; and, moreover, no one who had not learnt by experience would believe how misleading

and deceptive references to character and capabilities can be. On one occasion an applicant, whose credentials must have been pretty good, was to come over to be inspected and see his future place; he was, it must be admitted, somewhat anxiously and hopefully expected, for time was passing and the place was unfilled. The first sight as the coachman drove him from the station was enough. A fat, flabby-looking individual, with a fatally ruddy nose, he may have been sober enough; but the whole aspect of the man was such as to make it literally impossible to imagine him sitting on the reaper or leading the horses in harvest, or busy among the sheep in lambing-time, the duties which even the most dignified of working bailiffs may justly be expected to perform with alacrity and credit.

In some cases, again, the characters given may be perfectly correct, as far as they go, and may appear to cover satisfactorily the usual points of honesty, sobriety, industry, etc., and yet one may see in a moment in meeting the man that he would be quite out of place in the position he desires. An instance of this was afforded by a candidate for the same vacancy, who had really excellent references, and, judging from the way in which he was mentioned, was thought highly of by those with whom he had been brought in contact. He turned out to be a hard-working but unsuccessful farmer, who had been obliged to give up his farm, probably because his capital was insufficient; but a very short conversation



LEADWORK: VASE IN THE FORMAL GARDEN AT DRAYTON.

with him led one to guess that he was a crotchety and cantankerous individual, very prone to take offence, and a man whom it would have been almost impossible to get on with as bailiff, though he might have been willing to give the best of his time and knowledge to his master's service. Letters from the applicant himself afford no clue whatever to his real character. You may get a roughly-written, straightforward letter, the very sort of composition you would expect from a plain hard-working farmer, and the man may entirely belie the idea which you form of him, and be a talkative, amateurish, clerk-like-looking fellow, while, of course, a well-written, neatly-expressed letter may be the work of a well-educated wife, and afford no real clue to the husband's abilities or attainments.

One golden rule may be recommended to those advertising or enquiring for a bailiff, and that is to distrust any applications bearing some town address, and thereby implying that the writer is, at any rate temporarily, "off the land." Once a man has given up farming and taken to the various more or less precarious occupations which recommend themselves to those in such a position, you may fairly conclude that either he has proved himself incapable of work on the land, or else that such abilities as he once possessed have grown rusty with disuse. The most promising applications will be those from men who are at the time in a position of the same kind as, though perhaps less responsible or lucrative

enormously effective, and, to an extent, real. It does not strike us as being daring for the mere sake of being daring; there is nothing dragged in for the mere sake of appealing to the vicious. Such plain speaking as there is, such bold incidents as there are, seem to us necessary to the proper setting forth of the scheme.

"Zaza" is acted, in one instance, with such sensational power and abandon, that, for this alone, the play will probably attract large audiences to the Garrick Theatre for a long time to come. In the representation of violent passion Mrs. Leslie Carter comes nearer to the ferocity, the electric vigour of Madame Sarah Bernhardt, than anyone we have seen. She has not Bernhardt's pathos—Mrs. Carter never really makes one want to cry—but in the representation of heart-breaking anguish and ungovernable rage she comes very close indeed to the great French actress. The possession in a woman of the mere physical endurance for such acting is astonishing. There are long-drawn out scenes of fury in Mr. Belasco's version of MM. Berton and Simon's famous play, which has achieved extraordinary success in France, Germany, and the United States. Mrs. Leslie Carter never faltered, but kept them to a pitch of strenuousness positively startling.

"Zaza" has been condemned in many quarters as an immoral play. With this we cannot agree. The point of view is perfectly conceivable; no doubt it can be taken that way. To our mind it is not even "unmoral," a more negative thing altogether. To us it points the moral of a weak, gaiety-loving woman, regenerated by the power of a great love, who is ready to sacrifice everything for that love, but who is punished relentlessly in the end, who loses everything she has grown to value, because the sins of the past must be paid for, because for such a woman such happiness as she has grown to worship is not to be.

Zaza, a *café chantant* diva, at last meets the man. To him she gives the adoration of her soul. For him she readily relinquishes all the adulation, the triumphs which till now have been as the breath of her nostrils. With him she is content to live alone. Her upbringing, her life, have been such that she does not dream of his offering to make her his wife; so long as he is hers she cares for nothing. Then she learns that in Paris he has a wife. Mad with jealous rage she sets forth to wreck his home, to devastate the happiness of the woman who holds him; to take him from her back to herself. And when she arrives there she melts before a little child, his child; knows that her cause is hopeless; retreats, heart-broken, to lonely desolation and despair. But yet she cannot give him up. And when he returns, ignorant of her knowledge, she tries to keep the secret. But it will out, and there follows a scene like a raging tornado of passion. She tells him his wife knows all. He heaps violent reproaches on her; she, maddened, replies in kind; but, the further to rend him, tells him that his wife knows nothing, that his secret is safe. Immediately softened, he would recall all his words, but she, no longer mistress of herself, bids him leave her, never to return. It is a scene of bombs and shells, and mines of rage and passion, in which Mrs. Carter simply swept her audience with her, and compelled them to renay her with such applause as is but seldom heard in a theatre.

In the last act, after a lapse of time, during which Zaza, caring now for nothing, has returned to her old life, and has taken Paris by storm, meets by accident the man. Once again he falls beneath her spell, and this time promises to sacrifice everything for her sake. But she sends him back to his wife and his child and leaves him. They will not cross each other's path again.

That is the story, a terrible, cruel, ugly story, if you will, but engrossing in its interest, and, to us, relentless in its morality. Nothing could be worse than that our stage should have many such plays as "Zaza," but if the drama is to be anything more than milk and water, if it is to attempt to be the chronicle of its time, then a "Zaza" now and again must have a place.

The scene between the woman and the child of the man the woman worships lost something of its appeal, because Mrs. Carter has not the gift of simple pathos. But it was affecting and effective nevertheless. In the suggestion of the refining influence of a great love, and the return to vulgarity when that love is found wasted, Mrs. Carter was wholly successful. The remainder of the company play adequately, but there is only one figure in "Zaza," and that is Zaza. The "comic relief" of the piece is silly and antiquated, and wholly out of place in such a work.

Miss Irene Vanbrugh, who has now stepped right into the very front rank of English comedienues, will probably next be seen in London as the heroine of a new play by the foremost English dramatist, which is quite right and proper. After her return from America, whither she accompanies Mr. John Hare and his company, to appear in "The Gay Lord Quex," it is more than likely that Mr. Pinero will provide her with another character in a new play which we all hope will be the equal of Sophie Fulgarny. There can be little doubt that Miss Vanbrugh will take America by storm—there is something so sparkling and so elusive about her personality and her playing.

"Tess" proves to be but poor stuff—a mere tuppence-coloured theatrical version of Hardy's famous "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." Mr. H. A. Kennedy set himself a difficult task when he sought to place upon the stage the gist and meaning of the gloomy, powerful tragedy the novelist set forth with such art that its sordidness and unsparing realism were forgiven; but, difficult as the task was, it should not have been impossible to have sent over the footlights at



Lallie Garret-Charles,

MISS IRENE VANBRUGH.

1, Titchfield Road, N. W.

than, the one for which they apply; such, for instance, will be the better-class farmer's hands who have managed for the widow of a tenant taking on the farm for a few years after her husband's death, or a farmer's eldest son who has just married and wants an independent position, and has not got the wherewithal to stock a place for himself.

AT THE THEATRE.

"ZAZA," at the Garrick Theatre, is a lurid picture of Bohemian life, of Bohemian life in Paris, losing something of its realism and its actuality by its translation—a rather weak translation—into the American, but grim, forcible, vehement, and effective in a rare degree. It is not a pleasant play by any means; it is not a play to which a chaperone would take her charge, a father his son up from the public school; but it is a strong, trenchant, interesting drama, nevertheless; and, while none is a more strenuous opponent of nastiness on the stage than ourselves, yet we recognise that our drama cannot be given over entirely to young girls and youths; it cannot always be whittled down to suitability to the famous young lady of fifteen. Else there would be no great modern drama. Not that "Zaza" is great, but it is

least a suggestion of the atmosphere and meaning of the original work. We recognise that it is a dramatist's first duty to tell a story clearly and straightforwardly; we know that his limitations are much severer, that scenic description and analysis of motive and character—except such analysis as can be conveyed by spoken dialogue—are denied him; that the language of his characters must convey all that is passing in their minds, and that there can be none of that communing between the dramatist and his audience there may be between the novelist and his readers. Yet, knowing all this, we think it would have been possible to have made "Tess" less of a melodrama, less of a plain, bald setting out of unpleasant incidents, more of a psychological study, more of a purposeful work, than has been done by Mr. Kennedy. That much should have been done, or the task of translating "Tess" to the stage—for which there was no overmastering necessity—should have been left untried.

As it stands, the play at the Comedy Theatre is unattractive, unconvincing, unreal, and inartistic. It has become merely a melodrama of ugly incidents. The people are not real people, their motives are not convincing motives, we are never touched or moved by them, we do not care very much what may be the end of the tragedy set before us. And the emotions, or, rather, the causes of the emotions, which actuate the characters of "Tess" are so remote from those which conceivably might be felt by the members of an audience, that only strong and illuminating workmanship could have made them dramatically effective. But "Tess" at the Comedy is of the theatre, theatrical.

The wrong note is struck at the beginning. The peasants are not real peasants, of Wessex or anywhere else; they are stage peasants; sometimes they even remind one of comic opera peasants. Tess herself never suggests the farm or the plebeian—after all, the D'Urberville glories were so long ago that it would be heredity run mad to suggest that they could have made Tess a lady right off. They might have softened the roughness of her, they might have elevated her a degree above her fellows; they might have made the task of polishing her easier and more rapid—but Tess on the stage is a lady, in spite of her spasmodic rusticity, and that kind of Tess is not Mr. Hardy's Tess.

Her confession to her husband on the night of their marriage that she does not come to him a pure and innocent girl, but a woman who has been deceived and has paid the penalty, causes no thrill of pity, though the situation contains the matter for poignant drama; the scenes between her and Alan Trantridge, the man who is the cause of all her misery, never stir the pulse, though there is drama in every line of them in the novel. Even the murder of Trantridge by the maddened woman—a murder which is of such vital importance to the scheme of the play that, for once, it would have been more dramatic and more artistic for the audience to have seen it—gives us never a shudder. The pathos of the death of Tess in the ruins of Stonehenge—she is not hanged, as in the book, but dies ere the constables can take her—is the pathos of the footlights and leaves one untouched. Everything, in fact, has been missed. Only a great drama could have excused the dramatisation of such a novel as "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," and with that excuse Mr. Kennedy is unarmed.

Mrs. Lewis Waller did all that was possible, perhaps, with her part; the author had provided her with nothing to work upon, and the best actress cannot make bricks without straw. Mr. Oswald Yorke, a very promising young actor, showed intensity and fervour as Engel Clare, despite a certain theatricalism and lack of ease which probably are due to inexperience. The only figure which stood out distinctly was that of Alan Trantridge, a melodramatic villain, handled by Mr. Terry with incisive and uncompromising vigour.

The revival of Messrs. B. C. Stephenson and W. Yardley's funny farce, "The Passport," by Mr. Terry, who has returned to his theatre in the Strand, proved welcome, for the play has lost none of its savour during its long rest. It has humour, if not wit; crispness, if not epigram; and, more than all, it is genuinely and inoffensively funny from first to last. Mr. Terry, Mr. Ben Webster, Mr. Lionel Brough, Miss Gertrude Kingston, Miss Annie Hughes, Miss M. A. Victor, and the others go through it with admirable spirit.

"Cyrano de Bergerac" has arrived in English at last and was most courteously received at Wyndham's Theatre, for he is an interesting and fine figure of a man, even though he does lack the romance, the spirit, the soul of his French progenitor. He is romantic, spirited, soulful—but not in anything like the same degree as the Cyrano who speaks French. But the wonder is, not that the English Cyrano is no better, but that he is so good. Messrs. Stuart Ogilvie and Louis N. Parker had a terrible task—almost as terrible as that of the Gallic gentlemen who have essayed the Frenchification of Shakespeare. Rostand is not a Shakespeare, but he is the nearest approach to him that this century has given us, and that is a fact. That the English adaptors have done as well as they have done is something infinitely to their credit. "Cyrano de Bergerac" in English is a fine play—though, necessarily, it is not nearly so fine a play as it

is in the original. These masterpieces refuse to be translated. They refuse to yield more than half their beauty to the despoiling hand of the foreigner.

How could Mr. Ogilvie and Mr. Parker retain anything like the spirit and *elan* of the poetic and romantic tragi-comedy? Let us take two rather trivial examples of the *espieglerie* which is lost in crossing the Channel. How were they to translate *giroflé* and *salade*, which mean a flower and a smack, a helmet and green-meat, both at the same time, and Rostand gives them both meanings at once? They have to translate them "dandelion" and "salad"—and the whole thing is lost. These only as examples of the impossibility of it. On the other hand, the adaptors have surmounted many of the great difficulties of their task admirably. They have retained the rhymes and the meaning of the lines of the ballades and couplets in a very poetical and artistic manner. The ballade of the duel, the Cadets of Gascony, and many other of the finest things in the original, retain a very great deal of their beauty and savour. The dialogue for the most part is most sensitively rendered. The effect, on the whole, is that of scholarship, of euphony, and of poetry. One only feels, indefinitely, that the French soul of it has gone.

Brilliant are the stage pictures, animated and interesting, dramatic and effective, though one cannot help feeling sorrowfully that it is not the kind of drama to which the British public will be addicted. There is so much more language in it than they can digest. Against this, however, we must set the attraction which Mr. Wyndham possesses in any character he may essay. As Cyrano, he acts buoyantly, feelingly, pathetically, vigorously. He is not an elocutionist, so the lines suffer, he has not the grand air; but he puts an amount of genuine emotion into it that even Coquelin never equalled. Miss Mary Moore is a pretty and graceful Roxane, though she too cannot speak verse. Mr. Kendrick as Christian, Mr. Giddens as Ragueneau, Mr. Robertshaw as De Guiche, are all excellent.

PHŒBUS.



THESE lines are being written after two most delightful days' racing at Newmarket. Spring has come upon us as a surprise, and it was quite pleasure enough to ride about the Heath on a hack in the sunshine without the additional excitement of racing. However, as a matter of fact, both the trials and the racing itself were full of interest and instruction from every point of view. But before coming to a closer examination of present events I must not pass over the appointment of Lord Falmouth as a steward of the Jockey Club. If Lord Falmouth were not a distinguished figure in London Society, and one who has seen service, not without distinction, the associations connected with his name would still make his taking office in the Jockey Club a matter of great interest. Lord Falmouth has been so long and so closely devoted to soldiering that he is less widely known in the racing world than his father, who was the most successful of horse breeders and owners, as well as one of the most high-minded of racing men, but I have no doubt that the "star" will shine as brilliantly in racing as in other spheres. This is saying much of one who has to succeed Lord Durham, who has done so much to raise the character of racing during his tenure of office. Every one has not always been pleased, but there are cases in which disapprobation is the truest praise.

Steeplechasing, if it does not flourish in England, certainly holds its own in Ireland, where the sport is better and more genuine than any we see on this side of St. George's Channel. Two meetings were brought off successfully in Easter week, of which the Ward Union Meeting at Fairy House naturally takes the first place. Fine weather added to the enjoyment of a large holiday crowd, and the presence of the always-popular Duke and Duchess of Connaught and the Princess Margaret was an added attraction. Lord Cadogan was absent, but a large party from the Viceroyal Lodge, which included Lord Lonsdale, Lord and Lady Erne, and Lady Mabel Crichton, drove on to the course in state. As usual in Ireland, the racing was followed with keen and intelligent interest. The last race of the afternoon was the Dunboyne Plate, of two miles and a quarter. This race was, if I recollect aright, the one in which Drogheda made his first appearance as a winner. On the present occasion the winner turned up in Astronomy, a nice six year old bay gelding by Astrology. Volente, the favourite, was first over the last

jump, but Astronomy outstayed him in the run home and won by half a length. The last race on the card fell to a daughter of Royal Meath, the chestnut Clonoe. This was a most exciting finish, Atheling's Pride holding the winner to the very last, and being only beaten on the post by a head. It is to be hoped the news of Clonoe's victory may cheer her owner's (Mr. Guy Maynard) captivity in Pretoria. The success of the Fairy House Meeting did not interfere in the least with that of the Cork Park races. Owners and spectators alike supported the southern meeting well, and distinguished visitors were not wanting. Sir John Arnott had a luncheon party, at which the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Annesley, Lord Castlerosse, General and Mrs. McCalmont, Sir Charles Hartopp, the Mayor of Cork and Mrs. Hogarty, and many other smart folk were present; the management and the train service were both very good. Backers of favourites, however, had a bad time, and the bookmakers, whether as pencillers or owners, a very good one. The public fancy for the Maiden Hurdle Race was



W. A. Rouch.

CORK PARK: A PRETTY COURSE.

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Vernamont, but he had nothing to do with the finish, which fell to Mr. Reeves' Eureka, after a bumping finish with Mrs. Sadler-Jackson's The Curlew. That lady, not unknown on Indian race-courses, was consoled later in the day by the win of Stormy Sea in the Easter Plate. The best winner of the day was a nice filly by Sweetheart out of Vain Beauty, the property of a well-known member of the ring. This filly, Helen Stewart, won very handsomely from Ashstick, a great public fancy, and, although the old horse did not run very kindly, the filly deserves every credit for her victory.

Last week I had occasion to mention Forfarshire, and have since been reproached by a friend who saw the colt gallop for not laying more stress on the good shoulders which will doubtless enable Forfarshire, big colt as he is, to come down the hill at Epsom smoothly and easily. Mr. Brice's colt is a strong favourite, so far as any favourite is supported so long before the Derby in these days. I quite expect to see him win, and, indeed, do not see what is to beat him. Chevening, Mr. Musker's Orion colt, might run into a place, but he is not quite a Derby winner. Democrat is no more a favourite of mine than he was when I began these notes. Diamond Jubilee's temper is always against him, though he is a nice colt, and might run well if Mornington Canton can get on with him.

It is to be hoped that the stewards will keep an eye on some of the American jockeys this season. In common with some other careful observers, I did not like the look of some recent finishes at all. The days of jockey rings are over.

To turn to a pleasanter topic, I have before me the annual report of the Middlesex Racing Club. Messrs. Pratt have carried out at considerable cost, but with great efficiency, the alterations made necessary by the new rules of racing. Indeed, more has been done at Alexandra Park than need have been. One-third instead of one-fourth of the full amount of stakes has been given to races of a mile and a quarter. To those of us who are warm supporters of the new rules it is gratifying to note that the daily average of starters in an exceptionally dry summer reached sixty-seven, as against a previous record of sixty. Something must be allowed to the credit of good management, and the care shown for the comfort of members (the luncheon, by the way, being excellent) is most praiseworthy. The late meeting was a success, and the London Cup has taken its place among the best of the Spring Handicaps. Downham's win was popular, for he is a very good colt, in spite of the swerving finish, which was, as I have already shown, as much or more the fault of the rider as of the horse.

W. A. Rouch.

Hudson & Kearns

NOTABILITIES AT CORK.

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sea. A boisterous wind is a nuisance on a hunting day anywhere, but it is most of all a nuisance in a woodland country and where fallow buck is the quarry. It is most desirable if you are hunting a cunning old buck to be able to follow his turns and twists by the ear. It is often only by the cry of hounds that you can tell where the chase is. Even a view may be deceptive, and several of us were put out of the hunt by the ill-luck of meeting a fine buck coming back with a single hound in hot pursuit. But this is to anticipate. At first everything went well; the tufers found at once, and were soon stopped, while Mr. Kelly galloped back for the pack, which were waiting at the place of meeting. The whole ceremony of tufing lasted barely half-an-hour. Unluckily everything was against us from that moment. The high wind aforesaid made hearing difficult. There was not a good scent, for if hounds spoke on the line when laid on I could not hear them, though they were not 20yds. from me. The only thing that could have redeemed the day was a good bold buck which would have gone away. Instead, we had before the pack a cunning old gentleman up to every move of the game, and determined not to be hunted if he could find a substitute. This he succeeded in doing early in the day, for I met what no doubt was the hunted buck with a single hound in close pursuit. Someone had viewed the other, and as he was also huntable and neither had been run much, White went on with the pack after the second. After this we might have gone home; there was no scent in the woods, and the deer would not leave the enclosures to enable us to learn whether scent was better outside. Hounds could scarcely speak on the line at all. Now and again a fine-nosed hound would whimper, but there was nothing to hold us to the hunted buck, and gradually the line was crossed and fouled by fresher lines of does which were cantering about, graceful but unwelcome forms, in all directions throughout the enclosures.

The laying on of the hounds and the crossing of a ride by a buck and twelve does were the two most picturesque scenes of the day. At all events, those who do not know the forest would say, your horse was fresh. But it is exactly these days of galloping wildly, vaguely about the enclosures which try the horses, and though the stout Irish cob I rode is good enough for two days a week as a rule, he will not be asked to come again for a week, as a precautionary measure.

Next week we shall have stag-hunting and other hunting, and had the New Forest Hounds not made a finish I might for the first time in my life have hunted stag, fox, and otter all in one week. X.

Buck-hunting in the New Forest.

TO go stag-hunting on Easter Monday has something of a Cockney flavour about it, yet although many trippers assembled at the meet of the New Forest Buckhounds on Boldrewood Common, nothing can vulgarise the forest. There was a larger crowd than usual, no doubt, as we found when it came to galloping about the enclosures, which are by no means suited to large fields. Yet on the common the beauty of the forest in its first flush of warm April tints, the wide prospects, and the magnificent trees reconciled one to the trifling worries inseparable from even the smallest Bank Holiday crowd. The beeches in this part of the forest are very fine, and dwarfed the crowd into insignificance and made it look no more imposing than that at the county race meetings at Eynsham of old Oxford days, in which the rusticity was more apparent than the racing. Moreover, Boldrewood Common is a fairly long way from everywhere, and sport was more the object of the majority than picnicking, for which the day was not very well suited. A high cold wind swept up from the

VEDETTE.



Photo.

GOING TO THE MEET.

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Correspondence.

WATER-LILIES FOR A POOL.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—Would you kindly tell me if water-lilies would do well in an entirely stagnant pond of about half an acre in peaty soil? It is very well sheltered, being in the middle of a 150 acre pine wood, and surrounded by high rhododendrons. If they would do, kindly say which of those mentioned in your issue of March 31st would do best, and where they can be got, and you will extremely oblige—R. ERNEST HORSEFALL.

[Water-lilies would, without doubt, succeed well in your pond, provided that it is not too much shaded or overhung by trees. Sunshine is essential for water-lilies. The following should be given a trial: *Nymphaea Marliacea alba*, *N. M. chromatella*, *N. M. carnea*, *N. Laydekeri rosea*, all requiring fairly deep water, say 2ft. to 4ft., or even more. If these succeed well, then add the following, which are more expensive than the former, viz., *N. Robinsoniana*, *N. Ellisiana*, *N. ignea*, *N. lucida*, *N. rubro-punctata*, and *N. Andreana*. *Ellisiana*, *lucida*, and *rubro-punctata* require the same depth of water as the others mentioned, but *Robinsoniana*, *ignea*, and *Andreana* do

not require a depth of more than 1½ ft. to 2 ft. Such nurserymen as Messrs. J. Veitch and Sons of Chelsea, Mr. J. Douglas, Great Bookham, Surrey, and Messrs. Backhouse of York stock the best kinds.—ED.]

FLOWERS FOR A MUD-BANK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—I have a mud-bank made by the river stream, and I wish to beautify it with flowering plants. It is quite mud, and occasionally covered with water in winter, but not from now through the summer months. I should be grateful if any reader would give me a list of things likely to succeed in this position.—E. T.

HARDY PLANTS IN POTS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—In response to your wish to hear from readers who have tried hardy plant culture in pots, I beg to give you an account of my experiences in that direction. Mine is a very small garden, and I have a tiny conservatory. Circumstances compel me to be in great measure my own gardener, which has this advantage, that one is free to try all kinds of experiments, with the result, in my case, that my garden has been a *boite a surprises*, mostly of a pleasant character. I have taken in belated petunias, too forward ranunculi, *Primula denticulata*, auriculas, and German stocks, all of which have flowered beautifully, the petunias one year filling a box with colour in April. My conservatory is heated with a small Loughborough boiler (flow and return pipes of only 9 ft. length), aspect south-west, and opening into drawing-room. This year I have *Lilium rubellum* and *L. colchicum* showing buds already, and looking extremely healthy. I have tried



Photo BUCK-HUNTING: HUNTSMAN AND SOME OF THE PACK. Copyright

being in, but at the best they are only suggestive of golf pavilions and the like, and lack that solidity which contributes to the homelike feeling. I doubt whether even a temporary structure could be erected with the accommodation required for the amount named. What I suggest is that your correspondent finds an old cottage and adapts this to the requirements of the case. There are many here and there all over the country, the prices ranging from £100 to £200 freehold, with, say, an acre of land, and the cheaper the cottage is bought the more to spend on making its roof weathertight and the rooms habitable. Partitions can be pulled down, one really good room made out of two small ones, a bay window added here with pleasant window seat, perhaps an ugly modern cast-iron stove taken out and the original ingle nook restored. Taste is essential, and perhaps professional services would be necessary; old lines and materials should be followed—there must be no grafting of the suburban villa on to the old place. Then the advantages of the garden with its old fruit trees must be clearly realised—the flower borders, the old hedges and fruit trees are all so valuable and so much nicer than one can ever hope to form in any one lifetime. Near London and a good train service this will not be possible, but away from the metropolis and the railway, in parts of Essex especially, there are many beautiful old places going to rack and ruin, tenantless, with gardens wild-grown and uncared for, and to be bought probably for the price of the land only. There have been illustrations of such in *COUNTRY LIFE*; they need finding, but, found, there is great pleasure in granting to the sturdy old places a new lease of life, and greater pleasure in living in them when 'tis done.—ED.]

COTTAGES FOR LABOURERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—Your plan for the above in your issue of March 24th shows a well-known arrangement, one recommended by the Enclosure Commissioners in the Sheet 5 of their designs, and generally considered fairly comfortable. Its defects are:

1. The washing boiler inside the house, strongly condemned by the Duke of Bedford in his "A Great Estate."
2. The small size of the bedroom at the back only allows about 500 cubic feet. As less than 300 per person is supposed to constitute



Photo.

THROUGH THE GATE.

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anemones, but so far have not succeeded. I have a fuchsia in bloom, and have had hyacinths, cyclamen, arums, and mignonette for many weeks past, the first just over indoors. I must apologise for the length of my note. Gardeners are garrulous folk.—WINIFRED F. KING.

A COTTAGE FOR £250.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—Could you, or any of your readers, kindly tell me whether a comfortable little house containing two sitting-rooms, kitchens, etc., and five bedrooms could be erected for a sum of £250, and, if so, could you give an outline of design. I am asking this on behalf of a lady whose income has become much reduced, and who requires a smaller house than she has been accustomed to. Need I say how grateful she would be for any hint.—D. S. B. M.

[The following reply has been made by Mr. Quennell to "D. S. B. M.'s" letter and enquiry as to whether it is possible to build a comfortable little house containing two sitting-rooms, kitchens, etc., and five bedrooms for £250: "I think I can safely say that it is not possible to build such a house of any permanent character for the sum named by your correspondent. There are firms who build temporary houses, bungalows and rests for birds of passage, and these, perhaps of timber framing, covered with weather boarding and roofed with thatch, can be made picturesque outside and comfortable for the time



Photo.

WILL THE RUN BE GOOD?

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overcrowding, this would not be sufficient for two of the family, and to properly maintain pure air for one person it would require changing five times during the hour—an impossible task, I fear. It is a great pity that Mr. White has stated the cost of the cottages at an amount quite impossible to construct them substantially for. I have spent a lifetime actually erecting cottages in various counties, and upon several estates in England, and having within the last five years built cottages in Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, and Lancashire, I can practically aver that in either of these counties they would cost £800, not £560, for the four. This price was obtained by competition between a selected number of builders. Of course, I insist upon good workmanship and materials, and the walls should be built hollow, otherwise they will be always damp. They are not shown so upon your plan, but probably are intended to be built so. The great harm done by understating the cost of buildings of this description is that owners think (at least those who know no better) that as they have to pay more they are being made to pay more than is right.—ESTATE CLERK OF WORKS.

[We have submitted the above letter to Mr. White, who has made the following reply: "I am not at all surprised that an 'Estate Clerk of Works' should say that he cannot get the four cottages by Mr. C. H. B. Quennell built for less than £800. In fact, I should be astonished if any estate clerk of works could build them for even that sum, if the specification and general carrying out of the work were left to him. As he has withheld his name, and the districts in Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, and Lancashire, I cannot speak upon the particular districts where he has built. My price is based upon bricks at 28s. 6d. per 1,000 and plain tiles at 25s., delivered on site, which is the present price in Bedford and around. I think anyone who has had experience well knows the difference in cost of cottages when the plans are prepared in the estate offices of our wealthy landowners and those that are built by the large manufacturers or others for their artisans and employés. Mr. W. H. Lever of Sunlight fame very kindly gave me the cost of his cottages last week." I visited his model village, containing the most beautiful, comfortable, and altogether best cottages I have ever seen, and I was astonished to find that after having employed some of our most eminent and artistic architects, the cost of these cottages was considerably less than those (many plans of which I have had through my hands) for one of our most generous and thoughtful landowners for his labourers in the kingdom. I feel sure the reason is obvious to all experts in the erection of cottages, and if the 'Estate Clerk of Works' will give me his name and let me visit some of the cottages he has built, I can doubtless give him reasons which may not be altogether pleasant to him. In conclusion, as a practical proof of the correctness of my estimate, I will build four cottages in or near Bedford, to Mr. C. H. B. Quennell's plans, for £560, but not to an estate clerk of works' specification.—J. P. W.]

ENGLISH BEAGLES IN AMERICA.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Being a subscriber to your paper, I send you a photograph of what is probably the best-known pack of English beagles in America. Reading from left to right the hounds are imp. Leader III., Challenger, Norman, Newmarket, imp. Florist, Champion Primrose, imp. Bronwydd Merry Boy, Lonsdale, Lawless, Dorcas, Merry Lass, and Wharton's Champion. They are not only a working pack, but many of them are winners on the bench as well. The average height is 14 in. I trust you may make some use of this.—G. MIFFLIN WHARTON.

BLOOD MANURE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I wish to use some blood for liquid manure in my garden here, and my previous experience of it when used, diluted ten times, for plants in pots has been an introduction of blood worms. Can you tell me of any way in which I can treat the blood to avoid such a result when used in the open garden? I have been advised to mix soot with it. Is this efficacious? The soil in my garden is infested with worms to such an extent that when digging two square yards, I can pick out sufficient worms to fill a half-pint can. They range in size from the thickness of a pin to three-eighths of an inch, and pull whole leaves down into the soil, which is honeycombed by them a day after being raked. Young plants are bitten off from their roots and the leaves of established plants are eaten by them. I have tried repeated dosings of soot, which are of use for a few days in keeping the worms under the surface, but they attack the roots more vigorously. Will you be so kind as to tell me the best steps to take to rid the garden of these pests without having (if possible) to take up all plants and bulbs for a length of time? The soil is sand over sandstone, and has been very heavily manured with farmyard manure for a number of years, though no other care has been taken of it until last year, when I started digging and planing in it, with the results above

described. I shall be obliged if you can advise me on the points I have mentioned, as it is disheartening to have so small an amount of success after so much trouble and expense as I go to.—RODERICK, Shropshire, by Wolverhampton.

[Blood of any description is far from being a desirable manure; it is, of course, chiefly nitrogenous, and tends more to leaf than healthy wood production. If you have wood ashes, soot, and road sweepings or scrapings in a heap and pour the blood on to this from time to time, well mixing it, and allowing it to remain for some time before applying it to the soil, you will obtain better results than follow from an application in crude form. Failing the materials named, all of which help to supply potash and phosphate, which blood lacks, then use fine coal ashes and garden soil. Your garden is in a terrible state evidently, and this is no doubt due to the excessive dressing of animal manure it has received. Some of this, especially pig manure, promotes worms, and hence you must act differently in the future. A good dressing of freshly-saved lime now would be very beneficial, and do not give any manurial applications this year. Smother the ground with the fresh lime and fork it in, but you would do well to apply it late in the evening, when worms are feeding on the surface, as its caustic properties greatly upset the pests, for pests one must call worms when infesting the soil in this way. In the autumn, whenever there are vacant pieces of ground, give a dressing, at the rate of half a bushel to the rod, of gas-lime, leaving it exposed to the air for a few weeks, then forking it in. No doubt the soil is choked with animal and vegetable matter, and this the lime dressings will tend to dispel. If you allowed ducks to run in your garden at night they would destroy many worms, but possibly do harm otherwise. You should in any case get a good result from a dressing of lime at once, using it at the rate of 8 lb. to the rod.—ED.]



AN AGED CAT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Under separate cover I send you a photograph of my cat Willow, which, I think, might be interesting to readers of COUNTRY LIFE.

She was born in June, 1832, and was photographed on November 30th last, when she was 17½ years old. She is in perfect condition, and as playful as a kitten. Willow is a pure "tabby" and beautifully marked, as the photograph shows, and is the gentlest and most affectionate animal I have ever known. I think her age and beautiful marking make the photograph very interesting.—MOSTYN F. LL. TRINGHAM.

MAGPIES AS A PEST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—"X. Y." wrote in a late COUNTRY LIFE asking if any of its readers had any experience of magpies congregating in numbers in certain localities. He writes from Ireland, and it is rather a curious thing that it is the only one of the three countries which seems to be subject to those assemblies of these cunning but beautiful birds. In the Midland Counties, but more particularly Queen's County, very large congregations have been occasionally noticed, sometimes over 100 birds settling in some grove, when a terrible chattering goes on. It would give the idea of some sort of magpie convention, but what the object is it is hard to say. The magpie was unknown in Ireland till after the invasion by Cromwell, and it seems first to have made a lodgment in the County Wexford, and then spread over all Ireland. In some of the old leases in the

County Donegal there is a special clause binding the tenant to protect "that rare and beautiful bird the magpie."—T. B.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a question in your columns asking how magpies may be got rid of. I entirely share the view expressed by you that putting down poison is dangerous and for every reason to be deprecated. As a rule successful war may be waged on them in the nesting season. They make such a big nest that it is generally easily seen, or if in very thick-foliaged



trees, their habit of returning to a last year's nest should lead to discovery, since the site of the old nests can be marked before the leaf is on the trees. But the recognised and infallible way of catching these poachers, as the keepers will tell you, is to put out a piece of turf on a plank in the nearest bit of water. Put a trap on the turf and bait it with an egg. It is said that no magpie in the world can resist such a temptation as this. Probably his native curiosity is attracted by the small islet in the water where there was no islet yesterday. Or it may be that he thinks it, at a distance, some dead thing, on which he can feast, in the water. Possibly he takes it for a dabchick's nest. At all events, thus surrounded by water it cannot fail to attract his corvine curiosity, and when once he has ventured near enough to see the egg he is certain to come down to put his beak into it, for an egg is a lure for which the ordinary magpie will sell himself, soul and body.—H.